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[A GOOD SAMARITAN.]

GRAND COURT.

BY THE

Author of "Sometimes Sapphire, Sometimes Pale," &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

As once I knew a hapless Moorish maid,
Who dressed her in her buried lover's clothes,
And o'er the smooth spring in the mountain cleft
Hung with her lute and played the self-same tune
He used to play, and listened to the shadow
Herself had made.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The landlady of the village inn came into the room to try and comfort Norah. Long weeks of anxious suffering, terrible adventure, and constant peril of murder and sudden death, all concentrating their horrors in this consummation; the loss of the husband whom she had learned to love, and the deep trustfulness of her ardent soul had disturbed the even balance of her mind, had for the time cowed down her dauntless courage and rendered her a prey to deadly fear.

Norah did not sit meekly weeping, with clasped hands resignedly in her lap, neither did she dry her eyes and order out men, horses, and torchlights, and essay to lead them herself, to lead them out into the night while she searched for Hammond among the snowy hill paths. There was nothing calm or resolute now about Lady Norah; the beautiful bride of a few hours had lost her firm self-reliance, and she sat holding her hand upon her heart like one in mortal agony. She was white as marble, her blue eyes blazed with an unnatural fire. Every now and anon a moan broke from her faultlessly-carved lips, a moan so heartrending, so awful, that the landlady feared the brain of the young bride was giving way.

She was a kindly creature, motherly at heart, full of pity, and the largest compassion. She was a rosy-faced, pleasant-looking woman, of some five-and-forty years old, dressed in a white print, sprigged all over with roses. She came and laid her hand tenderly on the brow of Lady Norah, a brow that throbbed, burnt, and felt to the fingers of the good

and pitying woman like the brow of one who was fast drifting off into fever and, perhaps, a sickness unto death.

Norah turned her large, lustrous eyes upon Mrs. Towers and she spoke. Her voice sounded unnaturally high and clear.

"They took away my father, and then they tore away my twin sister, and now him, the best and truest hearted of them all, my Hammond, my husband—gone, gone. They have killed him—I feel sure of it—that woman has lured him out into the snow, and her creatures, the slaves of her will, have killed him. Such a ghastly wound. I see it." Her eyes dilated and darkened while they burned like fire-coals. "I see it right in his heart—the left side; his eyes are upturned. Oh, such a look, such a look!"

Her voice rose to a shriek as she spoke thus; it did seem, indeed, as though her eyes saw something which no one else present beheld. They looked wildly into the far distance, they rolled about expanded with horror. She bit her lip in her agony.

When the unhappy Norah uttered the last word, she made one step forward, and then fell heavily to the floor insensible.

"Dying—dying, the sweet young creature!" cried the pitying landlady, rushing to Norah and raising her in her arms.

Then Mrs. Towers applied strong smelling salts, burnt feathers, all at first without the smallest effect. Norah was laid upon a sofa in the little sitting-room, and Mr. Dodd, the doctor of the village, was sent for.

"Where am I?" she said, placing her hand to her brow. "Where is papa?"

It seemed strange that in that trance where she had lain buried, hidden from light and human reason, and human suffering, she should have forgotten all the startling events which had poisoned her sweet young life; all the shadows of blood and of darkness which had passed before her eyes since that last golden August, when a terrible letter had come into her hands as she sat in the old library at Grand Court.

But so it was. Heaven is merciful. The girl bride looking about her, pale and deadly faint, weak as an infant, and with the demon of fever battling to gain the mastery over her brain, was unconscious now of the utter desolation of her lot. She had forgotten Hammond—first the noble friend, next the devoted lover, afterwards the adored husband. She had even forgotten the gentle Viola, dying in a foreign convent school. All she felt was a dim uneasiness regarding the absence of the father.

"Where is papa?" she said to Doctor Dodd.

"Where is papa?"

The doctor attempted to soothe her.

"He will be here presently, my dear," he said.

The unwonted familiarity of address startled the Lady Norah. London physicians, men with the prefix of "Sir" before their Christian names, had always scrupulously spoken of her as "the Lady Norah," during her small childish maladies, and now this country doctor called her "my dear."

Who was he? Where was she? she looked at him inquiringly from under her long lashes. Then she said softly:

"My papa is the Earl of Monkhouse."

The doctor now started in his turn; the rumour of the murder of the Earl in the village in Normandy had reached the ears of the dwellers of the Cumberland hills.

"Is this so?" he asked of the landlady some time after, when Norah had been very carefully put to bed, and he had administered a soothing draught.

The landlady stood before a large fire, which had been lighted in Norah's chamber.

"Is it true, that this beautiful creature is the daughter of the Earl of Monkhouse?"

"She is a ward, sir, I believe, of a Mr. Bokewood who has lately come down to the Manse at Cumberton."

The doctor shrugged his shoulders and frowned; he was a Cumberton man, about the same age as Bokewood, and the memory of his youth was a dark spot connected with Cumberton, and the name of Norah's enemy.

"He her guardian?" cried the doctor, "then Heaven pity her if she has any property that he can lay hold of—tell me about it if you please, Mrs. Towers."

This Mrs. Towers proceeded to do, as well as she knew how.

"The young lady had a title, I believe, and Mr. Rokewood had used her very ill, been excessively severe to her. The young lady had been placed by her uncle (so do falsehoods creep into true stories) with Squire Macray's lady. Mrs. Macray, went to France, and the young lady went away with a young gentleman, and this morning, Mr. Redman the vicar, married them in Yauworth Church. They were to have spent the day at the village hotel, to arrange their affairs, and the next day to have driven in a carriage to Penniston, and have taken the train for London; afterwards they were to have proceeded to France. All this was settled as comfortably as possible, sir, when this afternoon a carriage arrived from Penniston with a lady, a gentleman, and two servants; they bait the horses and order lunch. The lady was not very young, not a girl, but still most beautiful, and dressed in velvet, and white ermine, and rubies. The young couple had dinner early, the bride had very little packing to do, so they sat talking over a great fire, when I am told that they went tea, and I send it up; after that I am told that Mrs. Peters the handsome woman in the lower room wants to speak to me; it is to tell me to ask Mr. Hammond Danvers to step out into the road to talk to her. The carriage had gone on. Well he went to her though as it seemed against his will; that was at five o'clock, now it's half-past one, and he has not come back."

"Heaven bless me," said the rough, kind doctor; "what a startling tale. No wonder the poor young thing fainted, lost her senses, ran wild. Its a frightful thing—a frightful thing," repeated Doctor Dodd, with emphasis. "I suppose this woman has entrapped him into her carriage. No doubt the young fellow is a fortune-hunter, who has married this poor thing for her property; now, perhaps, he has gone off to spend it on this woman."

Thus unjustly do even the best of us judge our neighbours.

"Heaven alone can tell, sir," said the landlady. "I hope its not what the young lady thinks. She fancies that her young husband has been murdered."

"Heaven forbid," said the doctor. "Who was this woman; perhaps they were a nest of London thieves?"

"No doubt of it, in my opinion," said the landlady, sagely.

Thus the doctor chatted with the landlady.

Lady Norah slept soundly, and awoke the next morning refreshed, and, thanks to the doctor's draught and her own strong constitution, restored to perfect consciousness, if not to perfect strength; her head still ached, but she had a vivid recollection of all that had passed. Strange to say, she still took the gloomy view of her husband's absence which she had taken during her temporary delirium of the night past, namely, that Hammond had been decoyed away by the Countess of Monkhouse and murdered by her creatures.

Pale as death, calm now as an unimpassioned judge, beautiful as a Grecian goddess in marble, looked Lady Norah, when, leaning her cheek on her small hand, she sat up in bed on the morning following the disappearance of her husband.

"Mrs. Towers," she said; "I was last night mad with grief, and brain fever threatened me, but, thanks to your kindness, I am restored to reason, if to misery. I have no hope now, Mrs. Towers, because I feel that grief, such as mine, is greater than I can endure." She lifted the bottle of restorative salts to her nostrils as she spoke, for a faintness came over her. Mastering herself by a great effort she continued: "I had rather suffer in the body and die quickly, than live, mad; body or mind must have given way under the pressure of such grief, and it has pleased the Father of Mercies to spare my mind, but I shall not live long to keep my stepmother out of my fortune."

"Don't talk so, sweet young lady," cried Mrs. Towers, between her sobs. "I don't know anything about the stepmother. I only know that good Doctor Dodd cured you last night, and he will cure you again. We will give you chicken jelly and port wine, and everything strengthening; as for your stepmother taking your fortune she should never have it if I dragged her downstairs by the hair of her head. No, live young lady—live, my sweet lady, if its only to spite your enemies; live and cheat them of your fortune."

"I have no wish to live; my father is dead, my sister is dying, my husband is murdered."

"Ah, not so bad—not so bad," cried the landlady; "that was a very handsome woman who went away from here last night; handsome, bad, and bold, I'll warrant her, and fond of fine, expensive clothes. You should have seen her velvets! And the young

gentleman was flattered by her, depend upon it. Men are so silly, and he got into her carriage. And then she was so deep, she wouldn't let him out; and depend upon it they drove on to Penniston, round by the steep fells. It's not much more than eighteen miles; when he was once in for it depend upon it, he resolved to be jolly for once. So he stayed and supped with her at some grand hotel, and to-day he will be back as penitent and as meek. I should let my lord know a bit of my mind, if it was me."

Norah did not smile, nor did the least gleam of hope brighten her blue eyes when the landlady spoke thus.

"You do not know my husband's noble character," she said solemnly, "his deep love for me, his horror of low and frivolous dissipation. That woman I firmly believe to have been my step-mother, the present Countess of Monkhouse. She has a deadly spite against Hammond. When she was told at the inn that he was married, she must have made up her mind to murder him. Had he been single she would have decoyed him away as she came prepared to do, and then she would have tried persuasion. Finding her hopes of becoming his wife at an end, she has murdered him."

"Dear young lady, people don't commit murder so easily as all that comes to; she would be afraid I am sure. Wait, wait, to-day the young gentleman will come back repentant, I feel confident, and now try and drink a nice cup of strong tea, with cream from our mountain cows, such rich cream, and see the roll and butter."

But Lady Norah only drank a little of the tea. She turned away with a gentle impatience from the offer of food. "Let me see the doctor," she said, "and the clergyman, Mr. Redman. I have a deposition to make with them."

The landlady could not refuse this request, so earnestly urged upon her by the despairing, though now calm and self-possessed young sufferer.

Norah arose, dressed herself carefully in a robe of lavender coloured satin, trimmed with black rosettes of Maltese lace, which had been a half mourning robe prepared under the directions of Lady Bateman during her first days of mourning for the earl. It was a becoming and most graceful dress, and had been sent to Lady Norah since her residence at Squire Macray's. Norah wound her hair about her head in wreaths and plaits beautiful to look upon. She relieved the lavender satin robe with a spotless white ruff round her throat, and then she entered the sitting-room, and sank down upon a cushioned chair. She looked every inch a queen, and a most lovely one, but sad, unutterably sad. Her large powerful eyes were fixed on the ground, the long black lashes swept her cheek; so she sat awaiting the arrival of the doctor and the clergyman.

The clergyman Mr. Redman came at once, accompanied by his wife, a good motherly sort of person, in a large black bonnet—and long woollen shawl old fashioned, hearty, full of sympathy was Mrs. Redman. The beauty and the sorrow of Norah touched her heart and excited her admiration. Norah received the worthy couple with all the graceful ease and cordiality of a highly-born lady.

"Pray sit near the fire Mrs. Redman," she said, "the day is cold, and the snow falls again." She shuddered. "I am grieved to intrude my trials and troubles upon you," continued the girl bride with a wan smile; "but I must appeal to justice. I can only apply to my fellow men for Heaven works through human creatures and uses them for his instruments, and I pray that he may use you to bring to light the direct oppression, the cruellest wrongs that have stained the annals of our times. I am not strong enough to write down all I would wish. Will you Mr. Redman oblige me by taking pen and ink, and putting down my statements."

Good old Mr. Redman consented at once, pen and ink were supplied, and he sat down and began to write at Norah's dictation.

She gave in condensed form the history of the last four months, beginning with the news of her father's death, received by post in the golden August of the current year.

When she had sat a careless happy girl in the old library at Grand Court, looking at the summer landscape through the delicious haze of earliest autumn, and ending on that morning in the bleak December, when she sat lonely, orphaned, and as she believed, widowed, in a country inn, amid the far Cumberland hills.

"It is a ghastly story, Lady Norah Beaumont," said the good vicar, doubtfully, when he had written it all down; "it seems to me incredible that such things should occur in the nineteenth century, and under the rule of our good queen."

"Ah, you doubt me!" said Norah, faintly.

"No, I am sure Mr. Redman does not," cried the vicar's wife, eagerly.

"No, Lady Norah, I do not doubt you," said the

vicar; "I only doubt the construction which you have put upon different events. No doubt Mr. Rokewood was a very severe guardian, and his locking you and your sister up was not the way to render you obedient and happy; but my dear young lady, I was not aware yesterday when I joined your hand to Mr. Danvers, that this was a match without the consent of your guardian. Mr. Danvers concealed that fact. I would not have married you had I understood all. I did not even know that you had come from the house of Squire Macray. I have never seen you in the Squire's pew."

"Pardon me, sir," said Norah, "but the question is not now about obedience to my guardian. I am a married woman, and my husband was decoyed away by the Countess of Monkhouse, and I believe, murdered by her."

"Ah! Hush, hush, lady," said the vicar, who was dreadfully practical, and very much inclined to uphold all authority; we had almost said all tyranny. He was a good man, but narrow-minded and prejudiced.

A guardian and a step-mother were in his eyes the good people, and a couple of high-spirited girls the rebels, irrespective of all the circumstances which Norah had related.

"I am very sorry you married without your guardian's consent, very sorry," said the vicar, shaking his head.

"But, sir, sir!" cried Norah, rising to her full stately height, and flashing a look of indignation at the vicar. "They were seeking my life. Have I not told you of the pursuit to the ruins near Grand Court, and of the man Rokewood, who held me head downwards over the wall?"

"A robber, most probably," said the vicar. "You said the man wore a mask?"

"But think of the day six weeks back, when he shut me up in the empty house with the madman?"

"Nay, the door must have slammed accidentally, and he must have feared you had run away, and so have gone on seeking you along the road, young lady. I can never believe that of a guardian."

At this moment the door burst open, and there entered Mr. Rokewood and Madame Diana. Norah, still weak, grasped at the table for support, then she sank fainting into the arms of Mrs. Newman. She heard a confused roar of voices, sounding in her dulled ears like the troubled waves of the sea.

"Wrong, sir, wrong—a ward in chancery, an unlawful marriage," she heard the voice of Rokewood say.

"I was under a wrong impression," pleaded the good, stupid vicar.

"Oh, spare the pretty dear," cried the voice of the landlady.

"This inn will be ruined; and I will see that you never renew the lease. I have influence with the landlord of the property, Squire Macray," said Rokewood again.

Then there was more talk. Oh, for the friendly doctor. But he was away visiting a patient ten miles off. Then Norah felt her lips and eyelids wetted, and loud voices called to her to arouse herself. Presently she was lifted into strong and savage arms, a long fur cloak was wrapped about her, she was carried downstairs, placed in a carriage, and jolted off in the company of those who sought her life.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

With heart of fire and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind;
Fate judges of the rapid strife,
The forfeit death, the prize is life. Scott.

HAMMOND DANVERS sprang lightly down the stairs when he left his young bride in the cheerful inn parlour awaiting his return by the warmth of the bright, glowing fire, the tea-cups, hot muffins, silver forks, and cold tongue and chicken laid on the snowy cover—a pleasant semblance of a home, if not a home itself, was that which he quitted for the snow-strewn road and the bitter, frosty air.

"Where is Mrs. Peters?" he asked of the ostler whom he met in the yard.

The man pointed with his finger to where a dainty, short-skirted figure was picking its way across the snowy path in the fast deepening twilight.

"The carriage, sir, has gone on," said the man. Hammond went on without a thought of fear or mistrust.

"Uncivil of the woman to ask me to speak with her and then walk on," thought the bridegroom of a few hours. "Well, I must first tell her as politely as I am able that my time is very limited. I must beg her to be brief with her communication, and inform her that it would greatly conduce to her safety if she could reach Penniston before the snow-storm set in."

He went on rapidly, a turn in the mountain road hid the dainty figure from his sight for a moment.

He was soon round the abutment of the hill himself, and there was the figure, still slightly ahead of him, the carriage still further in the distance. Above him towered the mountains white, grand, and silent. He went on close, close to the figure in black velvet, the head was turned, and he found himself face to face with the Countess of Monkhouse. She was pale with emotion, her black eyes blazed with rage, the very fires of Tophet seemed kindled in them. She was perfectly silent and stood staring at the newly-made bridegroom like a basilisk.

Hammond bowed to the wicked woman, but not very deeply or reverently. Hastily replacing his hat he said:

"Has the countess any commands for me?"

"Many," she said, with a bitter smile, "oh, many! You kept your promise well, made to me on the staircase in Grosvenor Square. You wrote to me punctually did you not?"

Hammond's dark cheek flushed.

"I plead guilty to rude neglectfulness," he said.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon,"

She waved her gloved hand at him.

"No need for late half-lame apologies," said Lady Monkhouse. "I despise such completely. I have a more important point to settle with Mr. Danvers. Will you do me the favour to walk a little more briskly, the night is cold."

"I would respectfully hint that my time is limited," said Hammond. "I must return to the White Crown Hotel at once."

Lady Monkhouse burst into a mocking shrill laugh. "True, most true. You have married a bride of the house of Monkhouse this morning, a beauty of noble blood, and the heiress of fifty thousand pounds. Oh, fortunate and disinterested young man!"

"I am fortunate in winning such a heart," said Hammond, in a low, deep voice.

"Most fortunate," echoed the countess; "as future events will prove. You have a lasting claim upon my gratitude, Hammond Danvers."

Just at their feet was a frightful precipice. At the bottom lay concealed a long-disused lead mine, yawning like the mouth of an open grave. Lady Monkhouse pointed downwards.

And she laughed a wild, unearthly laugh.

"Lady Monkhouse," said Hammond, with the courtesy of a true gentleman. "Do not excite yourself with such images of bloodshed and revenge. You only add fuel to your own unrest. I am not so weak, or so false, as to pretend ignorance of the cause of your anger. I have been so unfortunate as to have pleased your fancy. I, a man bound heart and soul and word to another. You have only to look around to find a dozen worthier men upon whom you may lavish your kindness, and who would respond with grateful devotion to the condescension of one so exalted in rank, and so splendid in person as yourself."

"You do me too much honour," she cried, sarcastically. "I am not anxious to marry a dozen husbands."

"Nay, I said a dozen worthier men. I expressed myself awkwardly. I meant nothing but courtesy. A dozen men of rank would be humble aspirants for the hand of the Countess of Monkhouse."

"For the lands, diamonds, and houses of the countess rather," she said. "Why, they were offered to you. Man—man, you refused them!"—she spoke savagely through her shut teeth—"you refused them through sheer hatred and contempt of the very person whom you profess to admire. You despise my forty and odd years. I am an old woman, in your sight, but I have the passion of a girl of eighteen, the will of a woman double that age, sir! I am not to be trifled with!"

She paused a moment, then said in a cold hard voice, "I am about to punish you for your perfidy."

The shadows of twilight had deepened while they had held this stormy colloquy. Hammond was not aware that the carriage had been slowly turned about, and driven silently over the snow. At a signal from the countess now it stood close to them. Three men stood close about him—three strong men—Anthony Chippenham with his butcher's fists, and two other hired ruffians who wore livery bought for the occasion.

"Now," said the countess in a shrill voice, and she clapped her hands.

Another moment, and Hammond was struggling with the microcosms. He was brave and almost as strong as Chippenham himself, but it was impossible to contend against the three. Soon Hammond lay at full length, while they bound his ankles together tightly, winding cord round and round his limbs, until a cry of pain broke from his lips.

The countess laughed.

"Bind a handkerchief across his mouth," she said. "Now bind his hands behind him. One thousand pounds to-morrow, Anthony, if this is well executed."

Hammond now lay completely at the mercy of his wicked enemy, his hands and feet were bound, his mouth was stuffed with one handkerchief, and tied over with another, he could not speak a word, or move a finger.

At this moment came the fagging trot of market farmers returning from Penniston upon their sure-footed mountain ponies. Hoarse laughter filled the air, laughter which sounded like the joy bells on a wedding morning in the ears of Hammond. But his cunning enemies stood about him where he lay shutting him out from honest men.

"I say, where's the road to Penniston?" asked Chippenham, gruffly.

"Stands right afore you," answered one voice, "till you come to white sign-post seven miles on, then take the left."

"Thank you," said Anthony.

And the fagging feet and hoarse laughter passed on into the night air, and soon grew faint in the distance.

"Be quick," said Anthony, "shall we pitch him down into the lead pit?"

He asked the question with the utmost coolness of a professional assassin.

"Give him time to say his prayers," responded the countess. "Lay him near the edge where we can pitch him over when it suits us. I wish to talk to him a little; retire out of hearing, good Anthony, you and your trusty friends."

This the men did.

"I am going to have you lifted up, Hammond Danvers, and cast down into that bottomless chasm."

The woman shuddered at the picture her own fancy had drawn.

Hammond's heart beat fast, his head swam, life, life! Ah, but to live, to live! It is thus with us all at the sudden approach of the last. How earnestly should we utter that prayer in divine service which petitions to be delivered from sudden death.

"Hammond, I love you yet madly—love you. I will spare your life. I will marry you if you will cast aside this foolish girl bride. She is under age, and the law will allow the marriage to be dissolved. No harm shall happen to her. Now to save your life. Consent. Look me in the eyes straight if you consent to marry me, and allow this silly marriage with your maiden bride to be set aside. Close your eyes tightly if you prefer death without me to life with me; then I call Alridge, whose face you have hurt, and who longs to send you down to make food for the mountain ravens! Now I give you three minutes to consider—three minutes by my watch?"

And she pulled it out of her pocket. Hammond's eyes were closed. Death, and such a ghastly death. What would be Norah's grief? She would die, or her noble mind would lose its balance. He thought only of her in that supremely awful moment. Ah! if she knew, if she were there, she would tell him to open his eyes—anything, anything, short of sin to save his life.

"Marry that fiend? Never! Better death; but, oh! not a sudden death; not such a death as that," cried his poor humanity.

"Two minutes are gone," said the countess.

Her voice sounded like a knell in the ears of the unhappy Hammond. His brain reeled, then he opened his large, dark, flashing eyes full upon the countess. She smiled grimly, and placed her hand at his heart.

"It beats fast; it is then possible to awaken your fears. Ah! death is not a welcome guest. No, no! Well, you shall live, Hammond, and I will be your bride; but I will not wait. My friends, come, lift this gentleman into the carriage; do not untie his hands. I can't trust him yet, prop him up against those pillows. Now, Mr. Alridge"—she purposely abstained from calling Anthony Chippenham by his right name—"Now, Mr. Alridge, take your place; tell the coachman to drive to Sternfell, a village three miles from this, on the borders of Westmoreland. Nay, I know this country well; the mail express passes that village at twelve at night on its way to Edinburgh; I will direct you; drive on to Sternfell quickly, quickly."

She stamped impatiently upon the rug at the bottom of the carriage as she spoke, and forthwith the horses' heads were turned in the direction of Sternfell.

All this while Hammond could neither speak nor move, he could scarcely breathe even. His soul boiled with rage and disgust against the shameless woman who sat opposite to him. His mind busied itself with schemes of escape.

His whole nature rose up in rebellion against the female demon who disgraced not only her sex but indeed the human species itself by her crimes and wickedness, and yet he knew that reason and prudence could only urge one course upon him if he

valued his life, that course was one of apparent compliance, humiliation, perfect and thorough obedience to the will of the infamous countess.

She addressed no word of tenderness to him during the rough jolting journey over the mountain roads. Chippenham sat by her side, and she had no desire that Chippenham should understand her wild and fearful passion for the stalwart, though helpless young man who sat opposite to her.

Sternfell was reached just as the moon rose, over the tower of the church clock, and the bell chimed out the hour of eight. Sternfell was a small and secluded village lying in a valley between two bare-breasted mountains.

There was an old Norman church, about a dozen stone cottages, a very small farm-house, a large general shop, a quaint little thatched parsonage and a stone house where dwelt the doctor. There was a lead mine in this valley, and the houses of the miners spread about in all directions, both at the shelves and sides of the hills, and far down the valley for a couple of miles beyond the tiny village of Sternfell.

A clump of mountain fir graced a portion of rising ground just below them. Standing about twelve feet above the level of the road upon a mound, grassy in summer, was poised a queer-looking inn with a crazy sign. The wind beat against it, it creaked, and seemed ready to come down.

The "Robin Redbreast" had three windows at the top, and one on each side of the hall door. The house was stone-coloured like the rest of the village.

"Poor old Robin Redbreast" said the countess. "I remember it in my girlhood, my early childhood rather." She stepped out into the snow with a gloomy smile. "Now," she said, "understand all of you, the thousand pounds is not earned yet. I have not attained my object, it is not the life of this gentleman, though if he prove refractory, it may be his life that I shall require at your hands." She bit her lip and frowned. "Now understand good friends all, secrecy, secrecy is the chief requisite, for to-night I could not have gone to Cumberton Manor because I should have had a most serious opponent in my own uncle. No matter, why! This I'm pointing to the 'Robin Redbreast,' will be the scene either of my triumph or of my failure and—my revenge understand—dropping her voice to a whisper. This is my brother, a dangerous lunatic. You," looking at Anthony, "are his keeper, those are my servants. We are on the way to Carlisle to place him in a private lunatic asylum. He must be carried in bound, and silent, he must sleep in a chamber going out of mine. You must not talk too freely, you two gentlemen," nodding to the subordinate ruffians. "Anthony I leave them under your guidance, sit with them in the coffee-room or bar, teach them to put a bridle upon their lips; for me I am most impatient to attain my object. I give this gentleman no time for consideration after to-night, and to-morrow night his fate is sealed,—he will be one thing or another at midnight. Now let us enter noisily, with all the clamour that these village folks would fancy must attend the arrival of people of fortune and fashion—not of rank—mark that Anthony, no titles."

Hammond was lifted out of the carriage. While he was being carried up the winding path that led to the door of the inn, he watched the form of the countess lightly tripping on in front of him.

Lady Monkhouse rang the bell. A white-headed landlord opened the door. Then rose her voice, high-pitched, clear, pleasant in sound, consummate actress that she was.

"On our way to Carlisle, my poor brother taken ill on the road—no, no doctor," in answer to some respectful suggestion on the part of the landlord. "I have no faith in country practitioners. Tea, please, and a chop at once, a large fire in my chamber, one for him to go out of it. We travel at night always. We shall remain until to-morrow evening. My poor dear brother hopelessly insane, effects, alas! of a sunstroke in India, he is an officer in the army." Here she sobbed faintly. "A room at once, please. This gentleman," pointing to Chippenham, "will order what he likes for himself and for my servants. Please have the carriage put up and the horses attended to."

The orders so rapidly given were promptly executed. Within half-an-hour from the invasion of the "Robin Redbreast," Anthony and his comrades were supping on beefsteak in the bar, amusing the good landlord with a number of fabulous stories; and in the best bedroom, before a blazing fire, a comfortable tea spread upon a round table before her, the countess lounged in an *improvisu* *dishabille* which she seldom travelled without, a dressing-gown of sky-blue cashmere flowered with silver; scarlet slippers were on her feet. She balanced a tea-spoon upon her finger, and looked with a smile tender, murderous, mocking, all in one, at Hammond, who sat opposite to her tightly bound to the chair in

which he sat. His hands were free, his ankles were unbound, his mouth was relieved of the odious handkerchief. His face was a study to the woman who had set her wicked love upon him. He was flushed crimson red and his large eyes blazed, his teeth were set, he tried to smile, for he knew his life hung in the balance, but a scowl contracted his noble brow.

"I have given you the use of your hands," said Lady Monkhouse; "and I have given you the use of your tongue. You may speak, if it so pleases you." "Lady Monkhouse is too liberal," said Hammond, who could not restrain himself from uttering this repartee.

"Nay," she said, frowning and smiling at the same time, "be not too sarcastic, fair sir. Tell me plainly, without politeness and without scorn, will you make me your wife by special licence, before this day week? Will you travel with me back to London, where it is supposed I am at present? And will you marry me at St. George's, Hanover Square, at once? I am terribly in earnest, Hammond. I am resolved to be your wife. And you will sign and seal a solemn compact before twelve o'clock to-night."

She smiled as she spoke, and stirred the fire, and looked up into his face, with a deadly gleam in her evil black eyes. "You are in my power," she continued. "If you were to call out for help, to denounce me to these simple mountain folk, who would believe the madman? Nay, rave your heart out. There is nothing you can do; it is the wave fretting against the rock! You break yourself against my pitiless power! Succumb Hammond—or die!"

"Death were preferable," thought Hammond, shading his face from the glare of her pitiless eyes. "I am married, lady," he said, gloomily.

"To a minor, to an infant, to a school girl," she cried, scornfully. "I will tear that contract to atoms and cast it to the winds. Nay, nay, let not this morning's folly weigh more than as dust in the balance against me, Hammond."

She rose and went over to him, and bent down and impressed a passionate kiss upon the burning spot in his dark cheek. He looked up at her so savagely that she started away, and grew pale with mortification.

"Nay," she said, "your temper promises ill for our honeymoon, Hammond; it will be a taming of the shrew with the sexes changed, ha! ha! ha! Now listen. I shall return to my tea cup and my tea cake; they are more inviting than your angry eyes. Will you eat anything? No! Well, Hammond, sign this paper, which I will draw up. You cannot help yourself, for see, you are bound. You have the reputation of madness. I have it in my heart to end the discussion now, at once."

"Respite I must gain at least," thought Hammond. "I will sign the paper," said he.

The countess pushed away the table, drew up another, lighted a second lamp, produced paper, pen, and ink; then drew up a formal promise to marry her. It occupied half a sheet of foolscap. Then she pushed the pen and ink towards him.

"Sign!" she said; "remember the mad patient will not be listened to. Sign!"

Inwardly cursing the diabolical creature, the unhappy Hammond signed the paper.

Then the countess leaped about the room like one insane.

"Done, done," she said; he dare not break his word. Hammond, my love, you shall have gold and silver like water. You shall be prime minister—you shall gain a title. Look not so sad," and rushing to him, she clasped his handsome head in her arms and overwhelmed him with caresses.

After a time she consented that he should be unbound and permitted to retire for the night. Chippenham was called up.

"If you are afraid of his escape, my lady, don't unbind his ankles," said Anthony; but the woman's mad love prevailed over her prudence.

Hammond went to bed in the room which opened from hers. She locked him in, and Chippenham slept on a mattress on the floor by his side, but the young gentleman was unbound. Hammond did not sleep; he waited until he heard the loud snoring of Anthony, towards one o'clock on that bleak and wintry morning; then he crept out of bed and put on his stockings, boots, trousers, waistcoat, coat, overcoat, cap, and silken scarf. He was dressed at last, and unbound; and Anthony was in a half-drunken sleep. Then he unbolted the window; it made a little noise, and he waited, breathless, for Anthony stirred and growled. Again all was still. He raised the window with a sharp wrench. Instantly the door of the communication flew back, and Lady Monkhouse sprang like a wild cat at his throat. She fastened her savage teeth in his cheek and bit it through and through.

"Traitor," she said; "traitor—liar. No more mercy now; none, none. Death, death to him. Up Anthony at him."

Nerved by a fury as great as her own, Hammond flung the wretched woman from him and then closed with Anthony, who came upon him in deadly earnest.

While they struggled, the countess first closed and bolted the window, and then filled the inn with her screams.

People with lights and weapons came rushing in. She had her tale ready. The madman had attempted her life. She had been weak enough to leave him unbound.

Remonstrance was useless, and Hammond did not waste his breath in vain expostulation with the people. He was bound now more savagely than ever—bound so that the ropes cut through his flesh. What torments he suffered through that night and the next day, with the fiend-like countess, hissing into his ears threats, the most awful we will not pause to describe.

The next evening just as it grew dark, the carriage drove away from the Robin Redbreast, carrying the supposed madman, the countess, the two ruffians, who acted as servants and Anthony. "Now, now," said Lady Monkhouse in the ear of Hammond, "now for a death a cruel death." They travelled for two hours, the snow was melting, and a cold drizzling rain accompanied by wind set in.

The travellers paused at a steep ravine. Beneath them lay a railway line, the countess drew out her watch, and examined its face by the carriage lamp. "In an hour," she said, "the express train will rumble by. Carry him down, and lay him across the line; he can't roll himself off if you bind him to that heavy block of wood, that lies under that heap of stones." "Now! quick, quick, with your work no chicken fears. Ah! how intensely I hate him, the express will crush him."

"Madam," said Anthony, while the men were binding him, "this is more dangerous than the lead mine. You may be discovered, and if so?"

"I care not she said, between her set teeth. "Oh, to know what he will suffer, it is delicious."

Hammond was carried down the bank, gagged, bound, unable to plead for his life, even with those ruffians; left to the most awful fate, when the men climbed up again, and he heard the mocking laugh of the countess as the carriage drove away.

He lay with eyes straining now upon the sky less misty sky, now upon the steep banks, on either whence the rain fell in blinding showers. Ah, if he only had his voice.

Presently he felt the earth shake where he lay, and looking far ahead perceived the light of the approaching train, gleaming like a blood red eye through the misty night, nearer, nearer, nearer, nearer that horrible death, and with all his frantic efforts, he could not move a finger, for he was bound to the heavy block of wood, bound hand and foot.

(To be continued.)

A SEAL IN THE THAMES.—For the last few days a couple of fine seals have been seen below London Bridge, having followed a ship from the north. One of them never got beyond London Bridge, but the other was driven up by the tide, and at length arrived at Battersea Bridge. He was a fine specimen, between four and five feet long, and Mr. Charles Graves, the boat-builder, of Chelsea, put off in a boat to capture the stranger, with a gun loaded with No. 10 shot. A charge was lodged clean in the neck of the seal, which almost immediately sunk, and was not recovered.

An agreement has been come to by the Great Western with the Post-office in reference to the telegraphs on the railways of the company. The wires used wholly or partially for railway purposes, together with the poles and instruments, are to belong to the Great Western Railway Company. The annual profits of the company on commercial business and the sums receivable from the Telegraph Company, are to be purchased at an agreed price, and an annual sum is also to be paid by the Postmaster-General for way-leaves and other considerations.

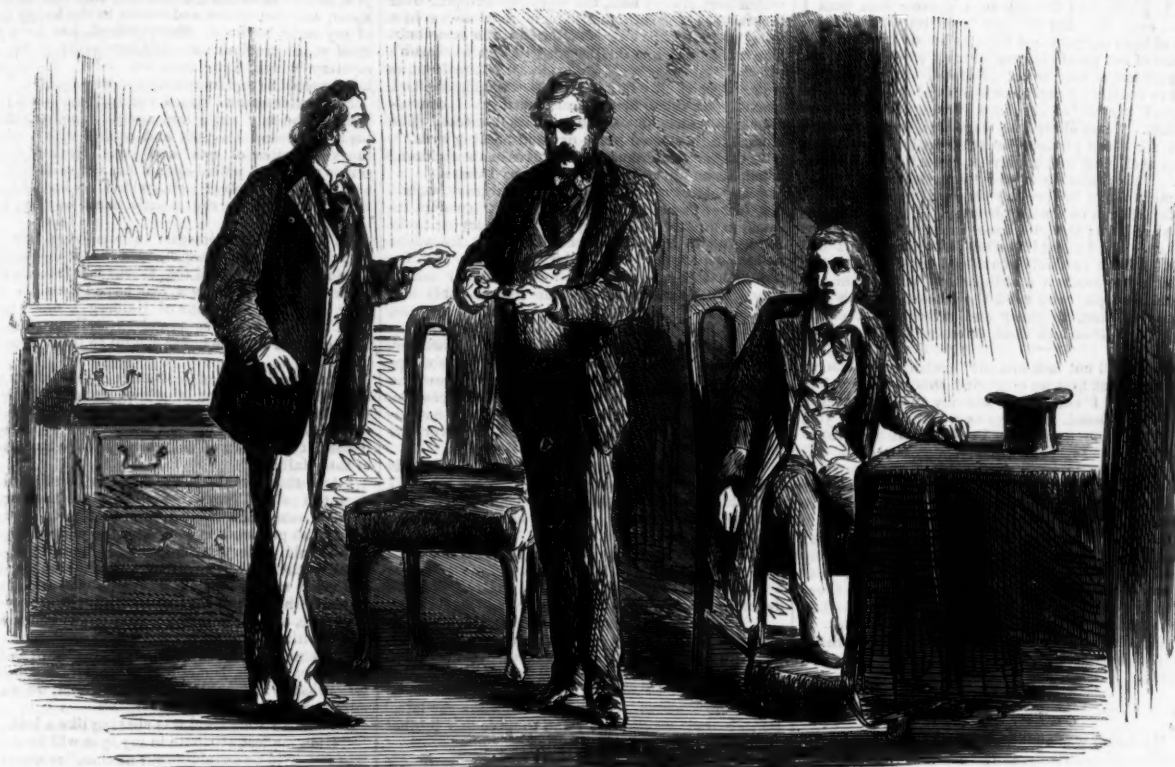
A FLINT PLANT.—There is at present in the possession of Mr. George Terrey, a builder in Clerkenwell, a most remarkable plant, for which the owner has refused considerable sums of money. It is about the size of an ordinary gooseberry bush, and although living and growing, bears no semblance of vitality. It has no foliage, but little pellicles of flint bud out of the twigs and stems, which are likewise encircled with rings of flint at every joint. In some places the flint, which, it appears, has exuded from the plant itself, cases the stems like a pipe. The plant looks black and dead, but the twigs, instead of being brittle like dead wood, are tough as leather thongs. It has been suggested that the flint, which forms so large a component of plant life, has, by some freak of nature, been eliminated in this case from the natural vesicles of the plant, and developed outwardly instead.

Scientific men from various public institutions and learned bodies have inspected this phenomenon, but without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion.

A VESSEL DISABLED BY A SWORD FISH.—The ship *Hertha*, now under repair at Singapore, was lying to in a gale of wind at night, somewhere near the Cape, when a violent shock was felt under the bottom; a second blow almost immediately followed, and then a third against the rudder. The captain supposed he had struck on a sunken wreck, as the last shock broke the tiller and some of the rudder pintles, and entirely disabled the rudder. After repairing damages the ship went on to Singapore leaky, and on docking it has been found that she must have been struck by a sword fish; a considerable piece of the bone still remained in the plank, and was taken out in the presence of the surveyors. From the injuries sustained by the ship it is supposed that her keel first struck the fish, as a considerable hollow is broken into it; that the fish then became enraged, and attacked its supposed enemy, broke off its horn, and then gave a final blow on the rudder. Had the fish's bone not been left in the hole, the captain and surveyors would have been under the impression that the injuries were caused by a sunken wreck.

THE SCARCITY OF BUTTERFLIES IN 1869.—It has been noticed that in every part of these islands, and in considerable areas on the Continent, butterflies and moths have been exceedingly scarce. That especial enemy of the garden, the common cabbage butterfly, has been quite a rarity. Consequently many crops that usually suffer from the ravages of the caterpillars of butterflies have been scarcely touched, and we have gained considerably by the scarcity of these lively insects. But in 1868 butterflies abounded. Now, as there must have been a plentiful crop of eggs left, why have they been so scarce this year? We do not profess to answer the question, but it is pertinent to it to say that they were not destroyed by the severity of the winter, for we had no winter. It is an article of faith pretty generally held, that "the winter kills the vermin." We have on many occasions shown that this is a mistake, that insects are too well provided both with means of protection, and with shifts and devices to evade the attacks of wet and cold, to be seriously affected by a severe winter. Yet for once we are inclined to believe that the winter did kill the butterflies, and that is the reason of their scarcity. The high temperature of the winter months probably brought to life many broods of eggs when there was no vegetation to support the larvae, and the very low temperature of the late spring months may have killed out millions of the newly hatched and starving creatures. Hard winters do not appear to be particularly fatal to insect life, for we commonly see myriads of butterflies and moths, and other insects in seasons following such winters. But mild winters may be bad for them, by preventing the complete torpidity of the pupae, and by bringing eggs to life at a time when food is scarce and the temperature inconstant. It is highly probable, we think, that the scarcity of butterflies is to be attributed to the unusual heat of the winter and the coldness of the spring.

ROBINSON CRUSOE'S ISLAND COLONISED.—The following bit of information will be of interest the world over:—At a distance of less than three days' voyage from Valparaiso, in Chili, and nearly in the same latitude with this important port on the coast of South America, is the island of Juan Fernandez, where once upon a time Alexander Selkirk, during a solitary banishment of four years, gathered the material for Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe." This island, little thought of by the inhabitants of the Chilean coastland, has lately become of some interest by the fact that in December, 1868, it was ceded to a society of Germans, under the guidance of Robert Wehrhan, an engineer from Saxony, Germany, for the purpose of colonisation. The entrepreneur of this expedition, Robert Wehrhan, left Germany 11 years since, passed several years in England, served as major throughout the war of the republic against secession, and was subsequently engaged as engineer with the Cerro Pasco Rail, in South America. He and his society, about 60 or 70 individuals, have taken possession of the island, which is described as being a most fertile and lovely spot. They found there countless herds of goats; some 30 half-wild horses, and 60 donkeys, the latter animals proving to be exceedingly shy. They brought with them cows and other cattle, swine, numberless fowls, and all the various kinds of agricultural implements, with boats and fishing apparatus, to engage in different pursuits and occupations. The grotto, made as famous as Robinson's abode, situated in a spacious valley, covered with a large field of wild turnips—a desirable food for swine—has been assigned to the hopeful young Chilean gentleman, to whom the care of the porcine part of the society's stock has been entrusted, and he and his protégés are doing very well in their new quarters. Juan Fernandez is one of the stations where whaling vessels take in water and wood.



[THE MEMENTO.]

THE DOWAGER'S SECRET.

CHAPTER XI.

THE jewel merchant and his customer talked on, entirely upon matters of business, but the former was so guarded in his expressions that only Count Scheffer and the detective were made aware that the lady had raised a large sum of money upon her diamonds. The interview was brief, and in less than half an hour, the room was vacated, and the proprietor had escorted the lady back to her coach.

The moment it was safe to speak, Count Scheffer turned to Frau Helver.

"In Heaven's name, madame, tell us if this is the voice of the woman who visited you that evening."

There was no perplexity on the woman's face; the eyes shone clear, though her cheeks were flushed with excitement.

"No," said she, steadily, "it was not her voice. I am certain of that."

Count Scheffer uttered a malediction.

"This, then, explodes your theory entirely," observed Meenart composedly. "It seemed too monstrous to me to be probable. Her ladyship had nothing whatever to do with it."

"She has! I swear she has!" vociferated the count, and then he turned again to the woman eagerly. "Think again, I beseech you; if the height and carriage are the same, how can you be so positive about the voice?"

"That is all that I am certain about, sir," returned Frau Helver, sorrowfully. "It was a peculiar voice, cold and hard, but every few syllables it quavered, as if caught by some spasmodic action. I never heard a voice just like it before or since."

The count sighed heavily.

"Baffled again!" he muttered; "it almost seems as if the fiends helped her."

"Well," said Meenart, "I suppose there is nothing left but to take this good woman back to her lodgings, Count Scheffer."

"Count Scheffer! Is this gentleman Count Scheffer?" exclaimed Frau Helver.

"Yes, I am Count Scheffer; why does it excite your surprise?"

She looked at him long and earnestly.

"So, then, another theory is exploded," said she, simply. "I have secretly believed all the time, that you fell in love with poor Tessa and spirited her away."

The count smiled bitterly.

"If you know how all my best happiness depends

upon finding her, you would spurn so preposterous an idea.

"You did admire her, then. Konrad always insists upon that."

"Certainly," answered the count, impatiently, "I admired her more than I can tell you, for her beauty and innocence, and especially for that wonderful voice of hers, and there was a still more powerful interest; but as for the sentiment which you seem to infer, it would seem impossible, because another has held my heart to unswerving allegiance for many years."

"I believe you. I shall tell Konrad so," returned Frau Helver.

Meenart had gone out to see if the great lady's carriage was safely out of the way. He came back promptly, and the three entered the cabriolet.

"I am going to see this Konrad myself," said the count. "Love is the sharpest detective after all. We will see what the pair of us can discover."

"He works down in the engraving rooms," said Frau Helver; "he gives himself no rest, that he may earn money for the search. But it is almost the hour for the men to leave for their dinner. When you leave me you can find out if he has come, if your lordship chooses."

Konrad was not in. Gotthart told them that he stayed a half hour over, to give attention to a stone he was working for himself, and the count, taking the address, went down to the printing rooms. He was shown by the porter into a long, narrow room, well lighted, with small presses ranged along in rows by the windows. There was a single figure at the upper end of the room, so absorbed in his work that he did not lift his head, though the count's steps echoed on the floor. He had just taken from the forme a sheet of heavy paper, on which seemed to be rude and grotesque tracings, as well as a singular spattering of colour. The sponge and roller with which he had just applied the colour, lay on the press beside him.

The count was moved by the profound earnestness of the young man's look and attitude, as well as by the melancholy of his grave lips.

"My friend," said he, in his gentlest voice, "I am glad to find that your art can give you a little solace. You are an enthusiast, I perceive, and ennobles whatever task is set you."

Konrad lifted his head with a sudden start, and instantly recognising the count, took a step or two to meet him, a slow colour creeping into his face.

"Count Scheffer!" he exclaimed. "Is there any new development that calls for the honour of this visit?"

"No, nothing new at all. Would to Heaven it were not so!" answered the count. "But I have come to make friends with you. A word or two which Frau Helver dropped, showed me that you have misunderstood me all along, and I come to explain myself to you. First, I wish you to understand that I have been an earnest and devoted lover of the Baroness Grafenstein ever since we too enjoyed our childish frolics together, at the happy home of a near and dear relative."

"You condescend too much to make such an explanation to a humble workman like myself," said Konrad, hastily. "I—I do not deserve such generosity."

The count smiled.

"I know that you mistrusted me, that you were fiercely jealous of the marked attention I paid, that night, to that lovely and unfortunate girl. But I have no resentment. I understand too well, from my own heart, what weakness a lover is capable of. And I am anxious to be friends with you."

"Friends!" repeated Konrad, bewilderedly; "you, the wealthy count, and I the poor printer?"

"Tush, my lad; are we not both men? more than that, both lovers, and anxious, disappointed, baffled lovers? I tell you both our love's fruition hinges upon the discovery of this fair young songstress. Let us clasp hands, and go together upon the search."

Konrad looked into the frank, honest eyes, and suddenly stretched out his hand, which the count grasped warmly.

"I beg your lordship's pardon. I have been surly and mistrustful, and am ashamed of myself."

"Have better confidence in future," replied the count. "And now tell me what you are doing with this odd drawing and these curious stones."

"It is the result of two years' study and the application of almost every hour of leisure in that time," answered Konrad, with a sigh.

"And what is its application? It seems to be but disconnected fragments of some drawing. As if a child had snipped out with his scissors the best portions."

Konrad went to a desk behind the press and took out a completed picture, and silently handed it to him.

"The Cathedral Madonna!" exclaimed the count, in admiration. "What an excellent copy! who painted it?"

"Nay," returned Konrad, his face lightening up with enthusiasm; "don't you see that I have done it by this same and tedious process which you believed had produced but a spoiled fragment?"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the count; "why, you are a genius!"

"Nay, again. The discovery has been a long while public, and belongs to a greater man than I shall ever be. But the art is in its infancy. It has been my proudest hope to be able to produce copies of our great pictures, at such a price that our humble homes may be all decorated and brightened. I have constantly experimented in colours, and spent a good portion of my hard earnings in the same pursuit. Tessa shared my hope. It was Gotthart's love for these pictures and his inability to reach them at all, that first set my thoughts in such a channel. This Madonna is very imperfect, but it encourages me to believe the time will come when all its defects can be readily obviated. You see the outlines are hard; the gloss, too, needs to be somehow broken. But I should find out the remedy, if I had time. I have certainly convinced myself that it is possible to produce a satisfactory picture for the common people, who need the lessons of such Madonnas as that, to cheer and strengthen them in their hard lives and their, oftentimes, bitter struggles."

"You shall not lack means!" exclaimed the count, warmly; "but first we must find this strangely lost songstress. I can never win my own Hildegarde until she is found. Strange as it may seem to you, our hopes hang together. You thought me singularly interested in your Tessa, and so I was. I will tell you presently what startling discovery drew my attention to her. But now I am anxious to learn the whole history of your wonderful family. I am sure I am not wrong in my suspicion that you come of a better stock than common workmen. Your Herr Wohler is a man of genius and culture; that lovely Tessa had an air of patrician grace, and you wear on your forehead a signet that plebeian blood never gives. Give me proof of your new confidence. Tell me your history freely."

"Come home with me. Come and see Gotthart, and you shall hear all that we can tell," answered Konrad.

CHAPTER XII.

"My father was a highly educated man, certainly," said Konrad, pensively, as the count and he walked slowly away; "and I know, for I have heard him say it with mournful pride and exultation, that my mother came from one of our proud old German families. But from my earliest recollection they were subjected to the many bitter trials of poverty, which my father chafed against with fierce and bitter impatience, but which my mother bore with saintly sweetness. Ah, how well I recall her pale, but always serene and lovely face. She was an angel, as well as a highly cultivated and loving woman. My heart bleeds now when I recall that terrible day when she was stricken down. I was only a boy of twelve, but I could understand something of the terrible despair which filled my father's soul, as he flung himself beside her lifeless form, and refused to hear any comforting words. It was indeed the snatching away of all the warmth and brightness and beauty of our poor home. I was so frightened by my father's stony grief that I could not give way to my own. I remember, ah, so well, how I hugged little Gotthart in my arms, and lay on our bed scarcely daring to breathe, day after day, only rising up when it was necessary to satisfy the demands of hunger, and to attend to Gotthart's wants; with my poor blurred eyes fixed in vague awe and terror upon my father's rigid figure, which looked to me as like one of the grim cathedral statues, that for years afterwards I could not bear to look at these famous masterpieces of art. I felt indeed that I dared not make any effort to rouse him, and I could only lie still and watch. But it remained for Gotthart to break the spell which held his brain in such utter forgetfulness of everything, except the dead wife. Since I have come to manhood, sir, I have understood better all it must have been for my father; what fierce anguish of remorse, remembering the luxurious home from which she had fled for love of him, and the bitter life to which that love consigned her; what passionate grief, what unavailing tenderness! I do not wonder that his reason nearly gave way, that he almost forgot the existence of his children. But it was Gotthart that saved him. Gotthart is like his mother, he has her eyes and hair, and her sweet, angelic smile, while I favour my father's darker complexion."

"Gotthart began crying one morning, and I could not stop him, though I folded my arms around him, and kissed him, and implored him to be still. Nothing would do, but he would have his father, and the clamour he made brought our father to his side."

"Oh, my papa," cried out the dear child, stretching out his arms, with an angelic smile that was like my mother's own. "I want to kiss you. Mamma told me, the other morning, to kiss you for her, if anything happened that she wasn't here."

"His blue eyes were shining with that tender look, which hers always held, the tears still dripping over the lashes; the soft, fine hair tumbled away in a wavy aureole of lighter gold, but still the same hair. The whole face was like hers, as like as a cherub's can be like an angel's, and, ah, sir, it melted the stony despair. My father bent down upon the bed, catching Gotthart in his arms, with great convulsive sobs, which shook him from head to foot. The blessed tears, started in his dry and burning eyes."

"Oh, my children, my sainted Anna's children," cried he, and kissed us both a hundred times."

"And after that, though he was woful grave, we had our father back again. All the poor comfort he found in life was in working for us, and trying to do for us as our mother would have wished. He taught us his own love of pictures, he gave us the best instruction that was possible, and filled our tender minds with earnest enthusiasm for all noble life. But he was smitten by a slow and painful disease, and died but little more than a year after our mother."

"Then I was left alone with my helpless brother. But Heaven watched us. Herr Wohler saw us weeping over the grave which contained all we knew of a home. His generous heart melted with compassion. He brought us to his own hearth, where he had already made Tessa welcome, and we had never left him. Now, sir, you know all our history."

The count was wiping away the mist from his eyes, and he said earnestly:

"It is a history which bears a touching lesson. I shall be better for having listened to it. Herr Wohler deserves to be canonised."

"He is a true philanthropist. Ah, is it not cruel that this dagger thrust should come to his generous heart? for no father ever loved a child with more devoted affection than he loved Tessa."

"She must be found. If there were not so many other powerful reasons, Herr Wohler's distress would be sufficient motive," said Count Scheffer, earnestly.

"And here we are—and there is Gotthart, watching at the window. No wonder he thinks me late," said Konrad, waving his hand to give his brother notice of their approach.

"Don't let me intrude," said the count, in his gentlest voice; "but Konrad has consented to gratify my earnest desire to see his brother."

"You are welcome, sir," returned Gotthart's clear, silvery voice, as he smiled back to the other's affectionate glance. I am glad Konrad has such excellent excuse for his tardiness."

Something in his look and voice made the Count Scheffer start, colour faintly, and then pale perceptibly. He sat down in the first chair, dropped his eyes to the floor, and passed one hand nervously across his forehead. The brothers could not help perceiving he was agitated by sudden emotion, but they kept respectful silence, and waited for him to make it known. In a few moments more he arose and came over to Gotthart's chair, and took the thin white hand in his, while he held out the other to Konrad.

"Boys," said he, "I think a kind and gracious Providence sent me here to-day. Konrad told me, a little while ago, that Gotthart had his mother's face. Looking into that face, which is the startling likeness of the beloved playmate of my childhood, and remembering that your mother's name was Anna, I need no further assurance of my claim to your affection and kinship. You have surely the knowledge of your mother's name or failing that, there must be some mementoes of the past, some trinket. Find it for me, I beseech you, that I may have the proof when I confront you with a soured, disappointed, proud old man, who lives alone in his grand house, childless and forlorn."

His voice trembled, a tear hung quivering on his eyelash; some profound and tender emotion filled his heart.

Konrad flung back his head, and an eager brightness flashed across his face, and lit up his eyes with an eagle glance.

"You knew our mother? you can give us a kinsman? Oh, Count Scheffer, I pray you do not raise false hopes in such tried lives as ours!"

"Do you not know, Konrad, convictions sometimes come which bring their positive proofs with them? I came in, full of your story, to be sure, but without the remotest thought of one who has been absent from my knowledge twenty-five years, and more. But the moment I crossed the threshold, the moment my eyes fell upon Gotthart's face, a nervous thrill ran through my frame. Whose is it? what strange, sweet likeness of one I have loved dearly? I asked myself. And then the answer came; the dear playmate of my childhood rose up before my mental vision; those lovely eyes of perfect blue, that fair, full forehead crowned with its golden floss of curling hair, the straight symmetry of feature. Oh, Gotthart, if you are your mother's living image, you are also the perfect likeness to my long lamented, and

dearly beloved cousin, Anna Halberg. Let me kiss you, as I have so often kissed her, who was at once sister, and sweetheart, and cousin, in the happy days of my early boyhood. So, indeed, has been my grief at the cruel alienation of her family, at the sad mystery which hung over her fate. Joyful and hearty shall be my friendship for her children."

He bent down and kissed the fair, ingenuous forehead of the boy again and again. Gotthart threw his arms around his neck and sobbed with a tumultuous mingling of grief and joy. Konrad darted across the room, pulled open a drawer, and took out a small, faded velvet case, which he brought and thrust hastily into the count's hand, saying, in a husky voice:

"There is this memento. I remember how she prized it, how she clung to it. I know that it came from her old home, and that it was her father's likeness. Many and many a tear have I seen her shed over it; but of the name of Halberg I never heard until to-day. She was proud as well as they. If they cast her off, she never sought to insist upon her claims."

"Halberg," repeated Gotthart; "you forget that noble General Halberg, of whose gallant charge we read such eloquent description, whom we admired so much last year and who, Herr Wohler declares, is the finest soldier in all the country. We have heard of that Halberg."

"And this," said Count Scheffer, smiling down upon the painted ivory in his hand, "is the portrait of that same General Halberg, Gotthart. I know from what picture it is copied, and in just what panel of the old gallery it hangs. He is my mother's brother, the poor, dreary-hearted old man; and he has made me his legal heir of all that snug fortune of his. Oh, my precious Gotthart, let me show him your face, and see what he will say about such cruel disinheriting of his only grandchildren!"

"His grandchildren!" cried out Gotthart, in wild amazement; "oh, Konrad, Konrad, dare you believe it? That grand, noble gentleman whom we all admired so much!"

Konrad's strong hand was shaking like a leaf.

"His grandest attribute in my eyes will be that he was father to an angel like our mother," returned he; and then he added through his set teeth: "But he cast her off. He left our mother to fade and die in a life of cruel poverty. Can I forget that?"

"Nay," said the count, gravely; "you must not begin by laying up a useless grudge. It was cruel and pitiless, I admit; but remember that he has been brought up to a soldier's life of rigid discipline, and your mother defied his emphatic commands. There was mischievous and injurious influence besides. The second Mrs. Halberg had no good will to the daughter and heiress, and would fain have foisted her own son into the general's good will. The graceless scamp, however, was killed in one of his reckless, roystering races; but it was after poor Anna had flown to her lover. There was a cruel helping of the widening feud between father and daughter."

"Now that the scheming stepmother is dead I think we shall be able to show the general how he and Anna were both driven to take positions very different from the real wish or intention of either. Think a little of him—the stern, proud old man, who has never spared himself when his honour or patriotism called him. Anna was his heart's pride and darling; the light of the eye, the joy of his home. His trust and faith in her were unbounded. He had selected her husband, and for a time, at least, she coincided with his wishes."

"General Halberg was away where his country sent him, leading victorious troops, when she made the acquaintance of the young artist; do not think I shall speak one word of disparagement of your father. I never saw him, and it is proof enough of his worth and genius that Anna loved him; but he was of another station, penniless, and with poor prospect of winning independence. And the Halbergs point proudly to their untarnished escutcheon, and a noble house that has stood its hundreds of years. You must remember all these things, and that the news of his daughter's engagement to the presumptuous artist was broken by the stepmother in her own artful, injurious fashion. He wrote to Anna with sharp, cruel authority. I have no doubt he seemed tyrannical and heartless, and it is probable Madame Halberg took care that Anna should view it so. She made a second appeal, and was answered by a tornado of furious threats."

"When he came home Anna had married the artist, and in his blind rage he drove her from his presence, with maledictions which he would not unsay. Do not think he has not suffered himself. You will see the furrows which secret grief has ploughed in the old lion's face. He has put on a mask of hardness, of early ill humour, but it is only a mask to hide the yearning grief of the lonely heart. It is a proof of the sacred tenderness which still dwells upon his

daughter's memory that he has turned so fondly to me. Did I tell you it was to me Anna was betrothed by his sanction?"

"To you!" echoed Gotthart.

And Konrad stared at him in equal perplexity and surprise.

"Yes, to me. We were of the same age, only children of two contiguous estates. I was away at college when this unfortunate affair occurred; and though it was of course a mortification and disappointment, I did not suffer very keenly, because I had already half fallen in love with another. I shall rejoice with the most sincere and unselfish delight, when I see my uncle take you two into his love and care. Gotthart, I think, will almost make good his mother's places. I cannot be thankful enough that he inherits the pleading beauty of her face."

"You are so noble and generous," exclaimed Konrad; "and you say the fortune was to have been yours."

The count laughed lightly.

"Do I want to usurp the claims of Anna's children? Besides I think I shall coax a queer old curmudgeon in Berlin, who is running over with gold, and no soul to leave it to, to make this up to me. He was my godfather, you know, and therefore must needs do the generous thing. He has talked hitherto about some public charity, because, forsooth, I wasn't capable of managing three legacies. This, you see, will obviate the difficulty, and the old fellow must see the necessity of the case. Well, well, I cannot be too thankful for this discovery. It scatters a very formidable scruple of mine, my dear Konrad, in reference to your attachment to little Tessa. Now when I find her, I can give her to you with a clear conscience."

"And we shall have money to follow up the search," cried Gotthart, clasping his hand in an ecstasy of delight.

"And to coax a better bloom into that pale cheek of yours," said the count sharply, looking from the boy's thin face back to the table, spread with its frugal repast. "I shall have in a physician, at once, and you must take care of the wine I shall send, my Gotthart, and all the nourishing luxuries the good doctor will order. And you must spare me some of your affection, even though your grandfather overwhelms you with his devotion, and takes you there to the handsome old home of the Halbergs."

"As if I could fall there," answered Gotthart, and then his hand stole out towards his brother. "But Konrad will be first, always first, and then Father Franz, and Tessa. They will be my oldest friends, whatever comes," pleaded he.

The count bent down and kissed him warmly, with renewed moisture in his eyes; and Konrad held the thin, delicate hand, with a look on his face that seemed to defy every evil that could approach the gifted unfortunate.

While they stood thus, there came a hasty, warning knock, and then the door was pushed hastily open, and Rosenberg, the detective, hurried in, and spoke to Konrad.

"We want you, sir, we want you at once. Wickart has gone for the baroness, and Meenart is looking all around for you, Count Scheffer, and I have come for you. We have found something—in the river—the clothing can probably be identified beyond questioning, and the hair."

"In the river!" ejaculated Konrad's shuddering voice; "oh, pitiful heavens, spare us! spare us! Just now when we were full of hope; how can we bear it?"

(To be continued.)

ADVENTUROUS VOYAGE IN A YACHT.—Mr. Empson Edward Middleton, late of her Majesty's 51st Regiment of Foot, who arrived in Edinburgh on the evening of Tuesday last, has undertaken an adventure which is perhaps without a parallel in the annals of yachting. He has undertaken to circumnavigate the coast of England alone and unaided in his yacht, *Kate*, a boat of three tons burthen; and in a couple of months from the time he began his voyage he has succeeded in performing the larger half of his task. Mr. Middleton left London in the *Kate* on the 15th June, and sailed down the Thames in the face of a heavy gale of wind from the north-east. On the 16th he had a good run from Greenwich to Ramsgate under close-reefed mainsail. He had light head winds all the way down the Channel, and made the Lizard on the 18th, and Land's End on the 14th July. Thence he sailed along the coast of Cornwall to Lundy Island and Milford Haven, encountering very stormy weather in the Bristol Channel. When off Lundy Island the *Kate* was kept out all night by the sea that was running. At Milford Haven she got becalmed, and was detained five days. On the 29th July Mr. Middleton attempted to make Scoons Island, but was

caught in a gale of wind, and had to put into North Haven. On the 31st he ran over to Courtown and Dublin, where he remained for two or three days, after which he made for Donaghadee, where he was again becalmed. On the 15th August a breeze sprang up, and he succeeded in making Ayr on that day, having taken exactly two months to accomplish the voyage from London. The wind again falling away, he lost a day at Ayr; and on reaching Irvine on the 17th August he took the steamer to Bowling. From thence he came over the canal to Grangemouth, and took the steamer to Leith, which he reached on Tuesday evening. Mr. Middleton intends to complete his voyage, which he hopes to be able to accomplish within a month; and with this view he proposes to leave Leith in the *Kate* on Wednesday morning. The longest spell of work which he had on the voyage was in coming down the Channel from Brighton to Southampton, when he was out two days and two nights, during which time he had no sleep. His usual habit was to come into port about midnight, rest for two or three hours generally on board the yacht, and start again about three next morning. He very frequently found himself becalmed when four or five miles off the port where he meant to spend the night, and had to work himself into the harbour. He also lost much time when off Cornwall in waiting for the flowing of the tide to float his yacht out of the dry harbours on that coast. The *Kate* is a very handsome little craft, of 21 ft. keel by 7 ft beam, and, as stated, three tons burthen. Large crowds of interested spectators collected around her as she lay in Leith Harbour on Wednesday.

RANDOLPH PERRY'S TEMPTATION.

To those who were not accustomed to the mysterious workings of that Divine Providence which "passeth understanding" it may have seemed as though that providence had deserted Randolph Perry in his old age and utterly cast him off. And his was, indeed, a hard lot. We do not often find a case of such great hardship in human affairs; for, although he had begun life with the brightest prospects, with abundant wealth, a pleasant home, a loving wife and children, his seventieth summer found him stripped of all save the roof above his head, and seriously threatened with the loss of that. Twenty long, weary years back, his reverses had begun in the sudden and distressing death of his dear wife; and this irreparable blow was soon after followed by the elopement of his daughter Annie, the pet and darling of his heart, with an artful scoundrel with a sham title. He heard of her but once afterwards, and that was when the news of her suicide reached him.

This visitation humbled him almost to the dust, and brought with it a sickness that laid him prostrate for a twelvemonth, and nearly cost him his life. He rose from his sick bed, and appeared to the little world of his acquaintance only the wreck of his former manhood. His first inquiries were for Simeon, his boy. No one would answer him at first; they looked pitifully at him and kept silent, but when he angrily demanded to know the truth, they were compelled to tell him that Simeon, his only remaining hope, had heartlessly deserted him during his sickness, and, as was supposed, had gone off to sea. Randolph Perry did not die with this accumulation of griefs; he lived on in a hopeless, morbid kind of way; but no one had seen him smile since he was told of Simeon's desertion. That was nearly twenty years back. He had dwelt in the house where he had been bereaved ever since, with no society save that of the woman who attended to his small domestic affairs.

Randolph Perry was not a misanthrope. His heart had been deadened, not chilled, by its severe afflictions; yet there was but one thing that made life tolerable to him after those afflictions. This was, that his beautiful home at Woodhampton, where he had passed the many happy years of his wedded life, and had enjoyed the infancy and childhood of his cherished son and daughter, before they had made him unhappy with their ingratitude, that Woodhampton was still his. All of the happiness that he had known in life (and it was much) he had known here; and there remained to him at least the melancholy satisfaction of knowing that Woodhampton was to be his until his death, and that his last breath would be drawn here amid the memorials of his domestic happiness.

But who can foresee the future, or who can predict to what depths of misery the human heart may be plunged? This beautiful mansion, standing high up on a knoll that overlooked the sea, surrounded with spacious and cultivated grounds which his own hands had largely improved, had been purchased by Perry of its previous owner, who was his friend, and upon whose assurance that the place was unincumbered and free from all legal claims, he implicitly relied

That friend had died penniless two years after; and now, as if to remove from his dreary existence the last ray of sunshine, he found himself threatened with total deprivation of his estate. As unexpectedly as though the heavens had dropped upon his bewildered head, he was notified by a lawyer in London that he held for one of his clients a mortgage upon the place, executed by the vendor a few months before the sale, upon which the principal and interest amounted to quite the value of the place, and that immediate satisfaction was demanded and expected.

The claim was full of indications of fraud in the owner's eyes, and obeying the first impulse of his indignation, the old man seized a pen and dashed off a defiant letter, denouncing the mortgage as a forgery. The answer was the service of a writ beginning a foreclosure. Then followed a tedious and vexatious litigation, which resulted in establishing the mortgage, and declaring the pecuniary ruin of Randolph Perry. It was the last drop in the wretched sufferer's cup of gall. The little means that he could command from his broken fortunes had been swallowed up in his unsuccessful defence of the suit. He had been warned by the rapacious creditor that but a single week more would be allowed him in which to vacate.

All was gone; and he appeared to be tottering down to death, homeless as well as friendless, with but a few years, perhaps, of heart-breaking retrospection left him. Who then can wonder that upon the night when our sketch introduces him, he sat down in the gloom of the unlighted sitting-room at Woodhampton, and, thinking of all these things, bowed his withered face upon his hands, and wept bitter tears of woe?

The hour was about twilight; the untouched meal had been cleared away, and the old housekeeper had retired to her chamber above the kitchen. Perry sat in the front room, in a low arm-chair by the window, and, absorbed in his misery, he noticed nothing of the storm that was coming up. It was the close of a long, hot summer day, and all the sultry afternoon the oppressive air had boded a change. Great black masses of cloud ascended to the zenith after sunset, and twilight brought the first sullen voices of thunder. The low patter of rain-drops driven before the wind came close to his ear on the window-pane, but he heeded them not; and it was not until a vivid blaze of lightning made the room as light as day, followed by a terrific crash of thunder, that the old man was startled from his gloomy reverie. The storm grew apace, and the elements rioted without as though they would raze the house to its foundations. The rain descended in floods; the wind howled and raved around the eaves; and peal after peal, flash after flash, lent terrible sublimity to the night.

"Well, then," was Perry's unspoken soliloquy, "let the lightnings and the tempests do their worst. I do not care much now if they burned up and tore down the house; it's little enough to me now." And he sat and looked from the window, trying to derive a miserable solace from the bitter thought.

He had not sat thus more than half-an-hour when he heard the sharp unlatching of the gate, and the quick step of feet on the gravel and the porch; and then there was a knock at the door. "Wait a moment," he called; and after he had lighted a candle he went to the door and opened it. A tall man stood without, his garments clinging to him in folds, and the water running from them in streams. The old man held up the candle to his face, and saw a prominent nose and a pair of keen eyes under a wide hat; and for the rest, there was a handsome, rather benevolent mouth, and a mass of auburn beard. The man was a stranger to him.

"Well, good evening, sir," he said, in a bluff, hearty voice. "May I come in and get dry? Such a ducking I haven't had since I fell off the dock, long ago. Will you allow such a wet rat in your house?"

"Yes, come in," Perry replied; and ushering the stranger into the room, he brought some kindlings and light wood, with which he soon made a fire in the fireplace. The stranger took off his coat and vest, and squeezing the water from them, hung them on a chair, and addressed himself to the drying of his extremities. The old man looked on in moody silence, and the stranger was compelled to make the first advances.

"A pretty little place you have here, I should think. I saw it from the bottom of the hill before the storm came up."

"Who are you?" Perry abruptly asked. "Do you come here on any business? Have you anything to do with that rascal Murch, of London, who has robbed me of all my property? I don't know, sir; perhaps I do you injustice, but I have become embittered against everybody. I'll ask you kindly, if you came here spying for Isaac Murch, to leave peaceably—and now."

"On my honour then, sir," replied the other, much surprised at the questions, "I don't know anything of Murch, and I'm above spying for him or anybody. I came into Freehaven, down below here, this afternoon, in the steamboat, and I expected to walk over to Westmeath before the rain came on. I got caught, and I made for the first shelter I saw. But if you'd rather I would go—"

"No, no," interrupted Perry. "I wouldn't turn a dog out into this storm, much less a human being. Stay till you are dry and the rain is over, and that, I think, won't be before morning. I'll give you a bed."

The stranger returned his cordial thanks; and as the old man ceased to give him any attention and lost himself in his old, sad thoughts, the guest eyed him with a curiosity that soon deepened to interest. His bold features softened in a look of pity and sympathy as he noticed the white hair, the haggard, emaciated face, and the woeful look of suffering upon it, and giving a preliminary cough, he remarked:

"Pardon me, sir, but you've seen much trouble, I should say."

"Nothing else for a score of years," the old man answered, shortly and rather peevishly. "Family all gone, and property will follow in a few days. I thought you were the rascally agent, come to turn me out. I have had a wife and children to love me—I've none now. I have had wealth, but I'm a beggar now. And I shall die in a little while, so perhaps it's as well."

The stranger attempted some little consolation, but Perry was looking at the floor, musing again; and soon the stranger yawned. The old man lighted another candle and placed it in his hand, with only the words:

"First door to the right, at the top of the stairs."

The stranger bade him good-night; but the other paid no heed to the salutation, and as the guest withdrew, he resumed his gloomy thoughts. It was then about ten o'clock. The storm was then at its height, and it continued for an hour longer, when it abruptly ceased. The suddenness of its cessation aroused the lonely occupant of the room; and wearied with his stress of emotion, he took his candle and ascended the stairs. He had no heart for anything but his own dreadful misery, and he would probably have forgotten the presence of a stranger in his house, but for a ray of light issuing from the keyhole of the chamber which he had bade him take.

Randolph Perry paused, and merely obeying a sudden impulse, stooped and placed his eye at the hole. He had not the least curiosity about this man, and his act was certainly without motive. But his eye had but singled out his guest from the other objects in the room, when he concentrated his attention upon him with the greatest eagerness. He saw him sitting by the table, his back to the door, and the candle before him. Four or five piles of bank-notes, new and crackling, and each pile thicker than his two hands, were before him, and he counted them over rapidly, replacing them all in an oiled skin wallet when he had finished, and placing the wallet beneath his pillow. In a few moments more the light was extinguished, and the heavy breathing of the sleeper was heard.

Silently did the listener gain his own room; and as he stood there, he was a man transformed! Could he have seen his own face at that moment he must have been terrified at the fiendish passions that peered out from it. He straightened up his bowed shoulders—his eyes lost their listless, hopeless expression, and burned with a baleful light; and even his shrivelled, wrinkled cheeks flushed with the shame of the dreadful sin with which he was struggling.

For Randolph Perry meditated murder.

He forgot that his intended victim was a guest beneath his roof; he forgot the horrible wickedness of the crime; he remembered nothing in that moment, save that there was money—thousands of pounds—under the sleeper's head, which one blow would give to him. That money might save Woodhampton to him; or failing in this, it would certainly give him peace and rest while he lived. And with the hint came thickening suggestions which the devil always pours into the ear of the victim at such times. The deed might be secretly done, and all traces of it concealed. The body could be thrown over the cliff, a furlong away, and the ebb tide would take it out to sea before daylight. No one but himself knew of the presence of the stranger here; it could never be suspected that he had ever been here. He could do it; he would do it.

With this horrible resolution formed, the old man rapidly proceeded to its accomplishment. In his bureau-drawer lay a sheath-knife, eight inches in the blade, which he had never carried since boyhood; and opening the drawer, he took it from its sheath, and holding it up to the light saw that it was sharp. The demon must have had full possession of him in that hour, for he smiled as he observed the glittering

of the bright blade. Placing it in the breast of his waistcoat, he softly left his room and traversed the hall. Listening at the door of his victim, he heard his steady, regular breathing; and noiselessly unclosing it, he entered, and advanced to the bedside. The man lay upon his right side, with his right arm under his head, and his left thrown up over it. The night was sultry, and he had thrown the coverlet from his breast, and his heart was fairly exposed to the blow of the assassin. His sleep was calm and sound; he hardly stirred as he lay, except as the movement of his broad chest agitated his body.

It is said that before crimes like this, there is always an instant of irresolution while the guilty soul is gathering courage for the blow. So it was with Randolph Perry. He placed his hands before his eyes, shuddered, and withdrawing his gaze from the face of his victim, turned and looked wildly around the room. There was apparently nothing there to avenge him from his fell purpose. His glance fell upon the old-fashioned bureau; thence it turned to the high-backed chair on which the stranger had hung his clothes; then it rested upon the wall, with its quaint pattern of paper; and then on the table. Next he would look again at the bed; and then—

But his eyes lingered upon the table; he could not withdraw them. They rested on a large family Bible, the gift of his wife in happier days, and it now lay open as the hand of the stranger must have opened it, at the sixth chapter of Matthew. At the top of the page he saw, drawn with a pencil, in bold letters, but with irregular and wavering lines, as if by the hand of a child, the beginning of the thirteenth verse:

"And lead us not into temptation."

A change upon the instant came over Randolph Perry. His face turned deadly pale, his limbs shook so evidently that the light in his hand was extinguished—and with all purpose of crime banished from his heart he feebly tottered from the chamber that had witnessed this strange scene, back to his own room, where he sank on his knees by the bedside, and penitently poured forth his soul in secret thanksgiving to heaven for his deliverance.

The night passed away, and the first hours of morning still found the old man upon his knees; for even after he had prayed for hours, seeking for peace and forgiveness with tears and sobs, his memory wandered back to the day, long, long past, when he held his little son upon his knee and read to him from the great Bible; and he remembered how he had encouraged the boy to print the words upon the margin that he had that night seen for the first time for years. It was this that had conquered the demon within him, as he stood by the stranger's bedside with the naked knife in his hand. Thoughts of the sinless happiness of those hours, passed in the instruction of his children in the way of truth, mingled with the dreadful reflection that his own boy, if alive, might at that moment, somewhere on the earth, be threatened with destruction by the hands of ruffians not more wicked than himself—and at once his evil purpose fell away. And praying there upon his knees, in the still hours of that night, he asked that the judgment of heaven upon him for his wicked design might not be stayed, but that he might at once be driven out into the world, penniless and friendless, to be chastened to his death.

And it seemed to him as if his prayer was to be speedily answered, for as Randolph Perry sat at breakfast with his guest, both silent, and full of unspoken emotion, a chaise drove up to the door, and from it alighted Mr. Murch, the harsh and hateful agent. He entered without knocking, and unceremoniously addressed the old man, paying no heed to the stranger.

"Your time is up to-day, old fellow," he rudely said; "and if my client still owned the mortgage, my business here would be to turn you out. But he don't; he's sold it to somebody whom you'll probably see here soon enough. I was going by, and I thought I'd call in and congratulate you."

"Heaven's will be done!" ejaculated Perry, covering his face.

"It's just about time it was," Murch rejoined, with heartless insolence. "You've made trouble enough about that mortgage, and it's quite time you was set adrift on your travels."

"Leave the house, you scoundrel!" roared the guest, jumping up angrily, and menacing Murch with his fist.

"And who might you be, my lad?" the latter sneeringly asked.

"I am the owner of the mortgage, and I am able and willing to punish you for your cruelty to this old man."

And seizing the agent by his coat-collar with a grip of iron, the strong man spun him about like a top, throwing him with no gentle force against the wall till the breath was knocked out of his body;

and then opening the door, he cast him out into the wet grass. A minute later the crestfallen agent rose and limped out to his chaise, sore and bruised, and humbled in feelings. It was his first and last visit to Woodhampton.

The stranger reclosed the door and knelt beside the astonished old man and took his hands.

"Don't you know me, father?" he asked, in a trembling voice. "Will you take back your prodigal son who deserted you so cruelly? I never was bad at heart, father, it was Robinson Crusoe more than anything else that made me run away. I've come back now after years of wandering, with money enough for both of us; I've paid the mortgage and I want to live with you here at Woodhampton. My heart has been yearning to you ever since I set foot in the house; I've been ready to reveal myself a dozen times, but it faltered on my lips. Forgive me now, father; forgive me, and let us dwell in peace and forget the past."

His voice failed him and his head sank on his father's knee; and the glad old man bent over him with straining eyes, fondly smoothing his hair and faltering:

"Heaven has given me of its bounty when I deserved its curse. May my Father in heaven and my son on earth forgive me!"

Not until fifteen years more had passed was Randolph Perry gathered to his fathers. He lived long enough to see Woodhampton made happy by Simeon's children, and to renew in his children and grandchildren the domestic felicity of his former years. He died at last in peace, leaving to his posterity his estate, and a memory which they will delight to honour.

But it was not until his last hour on earth that he revealed to his son the secret of his temptation and deliverance on the night of Simeon's return.

J. F. F.

GRAPHOTYPE.—The process may be described as follows:—Upon a sheet of metal perfectly flat is distributed an even layer of finely pulverised French chalk, upon which is laid an ordinary steel plate such as is used by steel-engravers. It is then placed in a powerful hydraulic press, where it is submitted to such pressure that on removal the chalk is found to have assumed the form of a solid and compact mass of concrete, with a face equal to that of an enamelled card, which is rendered still more solid by a strong coating of size. When dried the plate is ready to be drawn upon; this is done with a chemical ink composed chiefly of lamp-black, gluten, and a chemical compound which gives the fluid the advantage of never drying until it is brought into contact with the chalk plate. When the drawing is finished, instead of a skilled workman spending hours, as would be the case with a wood block, in paring away every particle of white, the chalk untouched by the artist is quietly brushed away in five minutes, leaving all the ink lines standing out in relief. All that remains is to saturate these parts in relief with a chemical solution which renders them as hard as marble, and the drawing is ready for the stereotyper or electrotyper, who can produce from it by the ordinary method a metal block, from which impressions can be taken to any extent.

THE MYSTERY OF THE GULF STREAM.—It appears to us that, on a close examination of the Gulf Stream mechanism, the true mainspring of its motion becomes apparent. Compelled to reject the theory that the trade winds generate the equatorial current westward, let us consider whether Herschel's arguments against the "heat theory" may not suggest a hint for our guidance. He points out that an overflow from the equator polewards would result in an eastward and not in a westward current. But no such flow is observed. Is it possible that there may be such a flow, but that it takes place in a hidden manner? Clearly there may be. Submarine currents towards the equator would have precisely the kind of motion we require, and if any cause drew them to the surface near the equator they would account in full for the great equatorial westward current. At this point we begin to see that an important circumstance has been lost sight of in dealing with the heat theory. The action of the sun on the surface-water of the equatorial Atlantic has only been considered with reference to its warming effects. But we must not forget that this action has drying effects also. It evaporates enormous quantities of water, and we have to inquire whence the water comes by which the sea-level is maintained. A surface-flow from the sub-tropical seas would suffice for this purpose, but no such flow is observed. Whence, then, can the water come but from below? Thus we recognise the fact that a process resembling suction is continually taking place over the whole area of the equatorial Atlantic, the agent being the intense heat of the

tropical sun. No one can doubt that this agent is one of adequate power. Indeed the winds, conceived by Franklin to be the primary cause of the Atlantic currents, are in reality due to the merest fraction of the energy inherent in the sun's heat. We have other evidence that the indraught is from below in the comparative coldness of the equatorial current. The Gulf Stream is warm by comparison with the surrounding water, but the equatorial current is cooler than the tropical seas. According to Professor Ansted, the southern portion of the equatorial current, as it flows past Brazil, "is everywhere a cold current, generally from four to six degrees below the adjacent ocean." Having once detected the mainspring of the Gulf Stream mechanism, or rather of the whole system of oceanic circulation—for the movements observed in the Atlantic have their exact counterpart in the Pacific—we have no difficulty in accounting for all the motions which that mechanism exhibits. We need no longer look upon the Gulf Stream as the rebound of the equatorial current from the shores of North America. Knowing that there is an underflow towards the equator, we see that there must be a surface flow towards the poles. And this flow must as inevitably result in an easterly motion as the underflow towards the equator results in a westerly motion. We have indeed the phenomena of the trades and counter trades exhibited in water currents instead of air currents.

KATIE'S RUSE.

STEPHEN HARTHOUSE was thirty-two, and for a year he had been the husband of as nice a little woman as ever man need be blessed with. He had won Katie Blanchard from a score of lovers, and proud enough he was of his wife. Only one drawback there was to their married bliss, and this was that Stephen was jealous, and without any cause whatever, for there was never a truer wife in thought and deed than Katie was to him. But it seemed as though jealousy was a part of his nature, and that it would be next to impossible for him to free himself from it; though we are not sure that he ever made the attempt in earnest.

Well-to-do in the world was Stephen. His house was new and tasteful outside, as were the grounds about it; and it was furnished with an eye to comfort, and with a taste befitting his means, which were ample, for the place in which they lived was near to a large manufacturing village, in which he had an office, for he was a lawyer. I have said that Stephen Harthouse ought to have been a happy man, and he would have been so had it not been for this trait of which we have spoken, which was the bane of their married life, though as yet it had caused no violent outbreak between them.

Stephen was jealous of no one in particular. Let a man, no matter who he was, pay his wife the least attention, he was all on fire in a moment, and ten to one he would give the gentleman offence in some way, or show his feelings so that they were apparent to everyone in the company.

Katie could not receive a letter but what it was subjected to the closest scrutiny by him, and should the superscription be in the handwriting of a gentleman, his mind knew no peace until he had seen the inside of it. Of course all this was very annoying to Katie, who loved her husband better than any person in the world; but she tried her best to keep her temper, and up to the time when our sketch opens she had succeeded in doing so. But it had been hard work sometimes, much as she loved her husband, and many were the plans she had formed in her own mind to cure him of it, none of which she had put into execution up to the present time.

One evening they were seated as usual in their cosy sitting room. For three whole days Stephen had not been tormented by jealousy, and he was ready to enjoy the evening in the society of Katie who to his eyes had never appeared so lovely and engaging as she did then. With his body encased in a dressing-gown, and his feet thrust into his slippers he looked the very picture of contentment, and one would have said that it would have taken a great deal to have ruffled his temperament, so placid did he appear.

The evening wore on, and Katie arose to leave the room on some errand which she had prepared for his comfort, and as she went out and closed the door behind her, a letter fluttered from the folds of her dress to the carpet, and lay there unnoticed by her. But it had not escaped the quick eyes of Stephen, and in a moment all the fears which had lain dormant for a season were aroused. For a moment he sat gazing at it much as he would have done had it

been a rattlesnake which had fascinated him with his gaze; and then he rose to his feet and quickly crossed the carpet to the spot where it was lying. The moment his eyes rested upon the superscription his fears took a new start, for he saw it was directed in a bold round hand, which was unmistakably the work of a man. Hastily he strode back to his chair, and after gazing anew at the envelope he drew forth the sheet it contained and unfolded it. The words it contained were few, but they were enough to bring the green-eyed demon upon him with full force. They were as follows:—

"B——, Oct. 12, 186—.

"MY DEAR KATIE: I shall be at C—— to-morrow at seven in the evening. Do you be at the station on my arrival. If you do not I shall be disappointed, and shall think that you have forgotten all the happy hours of the past and no longer care for me. See that your monster of a husband (I presume that he is a monster, though I have never seen him) does not get hold of this and so spoil all.

"Ever yours, JEM."

Stephen Harthouse sat as one in a maze with this evidence of his wife's infidelity held in his outstretched hand. His left arm rested upon the table, and his hand was clenched as though he was about to deal a blow upon the man who had dared to write his wife so familiar a letter as that which he held in his hand.

He had read it once and had commenced its perusal again, when the door opened and his wife came in. A glance showed her how her husband was occupied, and a little cry escaped her lips as she put her hand down amid the folds of her dress to search for the pocket that she feared had betrayed her. A moment served to show her that it was missing, and that doubtless her husband held her letter in his hand. For a moment she seemed undecided what to do, and then at last her mind appeared to be made up, and advancing to the table she said as she held her hand towards him:

"That is my letter, Stephen. Give it to me if you please."

So occupied had he been with perusing the missive that he had not heard her light footsteps as she crossed the floor towards him, and her voice, breaking in upon him, made him start hastily, and to think for the first time that he had been guilty of a mean act in reading a letter that she had not seen fit to show him. But then as he remembered its contents he was glad of what he had done, and glancing up to her with a look upon his face which plainly showed that the demon of jealousy had got him in his grasp, he made answer.

"Is this your letter?" he said, extending it towards her, but not so near that she could get possession of it.

"Yes, Stephen," she answered quietly. "Please give it to me. I must have dropped it when I went out of the room."

"Who is this man who asks you to meet him to-morrow?" he demanded, still retaining his hold upon the letter and showing no signs of giving it up.

For a moment she hesitated. The colour came and went upon her face, but whether it was guilt or the suspicion her husband's words implied, it would have been hard to have told. For a moment a struggle seemed to be going on in her mind, and then she quietly made reply:

"That is my secret, Stephen, and I cannot tell it to you to-night."

"Why not?" he burst out. "Who is he who dared to write you such a letter as this, and I am not to know his name?"

"Because I do not choose to tell you, my husband. Surely you are not afraid to trust your wife, Stephen?"

"I will trust no woman who receives such a letter as this," he exclaimed. "Tell me who he is, and at once?"

His manner was almost fierce now, but she stood before him undaunted, though it was plain to see that a struggle was going on in her heart between love and pride.

Two red spots burned upon her cheeks, while the rest of her face was as pale as death.

"Stephen," she said at length in a tone that trembled slightly, "this that you demand of me I shall not answer so long as you are in the spirit that prompts it. You may scrutinise my acts as you will, but you need never fear that I shall do ought to disgrace you. To-morrow evening I will answer this question, and not before."

"And is it your intention to meet this villain, Kate?"

"If I choose so to do. But let us have no farther

words on the subject," and that there might be none she turned and left the apartment.

For a long time Stephen Harthouse sat with the letter in his hand, reflecting upon the conduct of his wife, and trying to think what was best to be done. This was the nearest approach to a quarrel that they had ever had in all their married life, and jealous as he was, it was something from which he shrank, and his better nature revolted.

At last his mind was made up as to what course he should pursue, and laying the letter upon the table he went to his study, from which he did not emerge until a late hour, long after his wife had retired.

The next day was a long one to him, but it dragged away at last, and the shades of evening began to come down. At noon he had stated that he should not be at home to tea as he had got to go out of town on business. But he did not go, and ten minutes before the seven o'clock train was due, he was skulking about in the dark corners of the station, so disguised that his most intimate friends would not have known him in the darkness had they stumbled over him, as like an uneasy spirit he glided about, taking note of all that entered or left the station.

The crowd thickened in the waiting rooms and on the platform as the minute drew near when the train was due, and as yet he had not seen the form of his wife among them; and he had begun to hope that after all she did not mean to keep the appointment, when she suddenly hurried into the crowd, and a moment after a distant rumbling announced the approach of the train.

He had hardly time to push himself through the crowd to a position near her, when the train came thundering in. A moment more and a tall young man rushed from the carriage, and to the horror of the jealous husband, clasped his wife in his arms, as he exclaimed:

"Dear Katie, how glad I am to see you."

"Dear Jem, how like old times it seems," he heard his wife say, and then she took the arm of the stranger and they walked out of the station and up the road towards his own house.

It was as much as Stephen could do to resist the impulse to rush forward and strike the man to the earth and so proclaim his shame to the world, but by a violent effort he mastered himself, and darting out of the station, followed them.

He did not come up with them until they had reached a point where the road was shadowed by some large trees, so that the moonlight could not penetrate to where they stood. They had paused here, and Stephen managed to get close to them without their giving any sign that they saw him. They were talking earnestly, and the first words he caught were these:

"Oh Jem, I am so glad that you have made up your mind to remain about here. It will not seem so lonely as it has done," and Stephen saw the head of his wife recline upon the shoulder of the stranger.

"And I am glad for both our sakes; your husband I hope does not know that I am here?"

This was too much for flesh and blood to bear, and the next moment Stephen had confronted them.

"Villain," he shouted, as he aimed a blow at the young man's head, which the other easily parried. "One of us does not leave this spot alive."

"Stephen," exclaimed his wife, with a ringing laugh, "don't be absurd; this is my brother James of whom you have often heard me speak, but whom you have never met before. I wished to give you a surprise, and so tried to keep his coming a secret."

Stephen Harthouse felt at that moment as though he would have been glad to have had the earth open and swallow him up; but no such an event occurred, and all he had to do was to humbly apologise. But from that time forward he was a changed man.

A. L. M.

NURAH PASHA has just sent to the directors of the French journals large letters of invitation, with gilt edges, for the inauguration of the Suez Canal, on the official date of the 17th November. His excellency writes, in the name of the Khedive, saying that the cutting of the isthmus doubtless deserves the friendly visit of the editors of the press. The document authorises the substitution of a reporter instead of the person to whom it is addressed. Every guest will, it is said, cost the Viceroy about 6,000 francs.

AN INTERNATIONAL FLAG OF DISTRESS.—Dr. Stenber, the physician-general to the Prussian Navy, lately presented a memorial to the French Government advocating the general adoption of an international flag of distress. The document was accompanied by a request that it should be inserted in

the *Moniteur de la Flotte*, in order to evoke an expression of opinion on the subject from experienced French naval officers. Not only has this request been promptly complied with, but the French Government has declared in the same journal that the wish shall be fulfilled, and that the consent of the Government has been already given to the introduction of an international flag of distress.

GRANDPOINT-HOUSE, Oxford, has been taken for the residence of the eldest son of the Viceroy of Egypt, during his course of study at Christ Church, Oxford.

UP to September 18th over 1,000 volunteers had forwarded their names for the visit to the *Liège fêtes*. It is thought the aggregate will be from 1,200 to 1,400. As many as 180 corps are represented already.

A PLEA FOR CHEAP POLLAGE.—The *North-German Correspondent* says:—"The great increase of letters during the past half-year has produced such an augmentation in the receipts of the Post Office that it is confidently expected the falling-off arising from the adoption of the one-groschen tariff throughout the North-German Confederation will be more rapidly made up than was the case in England after the introduction of the penny postage."

ANOTHER cricketing team is to visit Australia this winter. The agent of the lessee of the Melbourne Theatre, who makes the speculation, has selected the following team:—Mr. W. G. Grace, J. Smith, of Cambridge; Alfred Shaw, of Nottingham; Atkinson, Emmett, Lockwood, and J. Rowbotham, of Yorkshire; Charlwood, the Sussex player; Edgar Willsher, the Kent veteran, and Southerton, Jupp, and Pooley, from Surrey.

INTERESTING DISCOVERIES AT ROME.—The excavations in the Farnese Gardens on Mount Peletine, the property of Napoleon III., have brought to light some of the ground chambers of a senatorial house, which, having been built into the foundation of the Palace of Tiberius, is pronounced to date from the Republic. The wall are embellished with beautiful frescoes, which proves that the Romans of that period had attained great excellence in the art of ornamentation.

A FOREST ON FIRE IN FRANCE.—The local journals of the Gironde speak of a terrible conflagration which raged for several days in that department, destroying nearly twenty square kilometres of pine forest between Pierrotton and Canoloy. The fire was first seen in the property of MM. Pereiro, and continued burning three days and two nights. Several houses became the prey to the flames, and a sick woman is said to have been burnt alive in her habitation. The flames were at length extinguished by the energetic efforts of the population, aided by some employees of the Southern Railway and a battalion of the 31st of the line.

JUDITH LAWTON.

CHAPTER I.

Words like to those were said, or dreamed,
(How long since!) on a night divine,
By lips from which such rapture streamed,
I cannot deem those lips were mine.

"ONLY one thing, Mrs. Lawton," her husband had said, the day after their marriage. "Be discreet. First as much as you please, for I know you can't help it, and I don't care in the least, but you must keep my name clean. Let them gossip if they will, but keep clear of shame. That is all—I believe I can trust you;" and he carefully lit a cigar, begging her to excuse him.

"The Lawton name is, indeed, sacred," she said, with exquisite irony. "I know its owners never protected a ballet girl, or gamed, or drank. Yes, you may trust me, Mr. Lawton."

"Just so, I knew I could. And now shall I take you to ride this morning?"

This was all there was ever said in the fifteen years of their marriage about the conduct of each other. Fortunately there were no children to look observantly on at the conjugal happiness of their parents; each went as he or she pleased, and the result was naturally that no disputes marred their lives.

Mrs. Lawton had been married when she was twenty, and her unvarying care of herself had the effect of making her much handsomer as a woman of thirty-five than she was as a girl. Not that she was ever beautiful, but her brilliant blonde complexion, her scarlet lips, her slight and rounded form, and the curious grace of manner; the peculiar and changeable expressions of her face with its light gray eyes that obeyed her so well, all made her more attractive than any woman in her set. She had the peculiarity of appearing remarkably free from any ten-

dency to flirtation, at the same time that she was the most dangerous coquette then in society. Young girls with lovers would almost rather part with their right hands than that their admirers should come in contact with Mrs. Lawton. In spite of all experience and indubitable proof, it was very hard to suspect Mrs. Lawton, she had such an innocent, childlike way with her, and the men blamed themselves, never her.

Now, on this particular evening Mrs. Lawton waited with unusual interest for the beginning of the concert, for it was Sondheim who played, and she was anxious to know if he would see her, and seeing, remember through the fifteen years that had intervened since she had seen him.

She sat there quietly fanning herself, and recalling for the first time in a long while the events of that summer so long ago. She remembered the warm, fragrant night when Sondheim had discovered her falseness and bidden her farewell. Despite her hardness, she did not like to think of that evening, not to recall the bitterness of his tones, and the misery on his face. He had been very young then, scarcely two years older than herself, and it was certainly a bad experience for him—not conducive to the strengthening of his faith in woman. What kind of a life had he led since? Was he married? He assuredly now possessed all a man could ask of fame and popularity.

An impatient murmur in the audience, followed by applause, made Mrs. Lawton look towards the platform. That was he, was it? A slight, foreign-looking man with long, waving light hair, wonderfully brilliant eyes, and smooth white forehead—smooth save for the deep line between the brows; the lower part of his face was hidden by a full beard carefully trimmed and pointed. He stood quietly before the applauding crowd and bowed two or three times, as the noise grew more and more vehement. Then he turned towards the instrument which awaited him, every movement indicating to that one woman who had watched him so closely, that he had been and was a successful man—that this enthusiastic crowd was nothing new to him.

Did any pang of envious regret stir through her thoughts at the memory of what she had refused? At the thought that she might this day have been his wife, occupying a higher position than mere wealth could give? But he had been an unknown boy then, and no one could foretell the future.

Everything was soon forgotten in the wonder if he would remember her. But no one would have guessed her preoccupation. Her fan waved softly to and fro as the musician turned the leaves of his music, and her eyes wandered here and there in the most casual way.

"I cannot look as I did then," she was saying to herself: "but mine is a face that does not easily fade—besides, I was never beautiful."

Even such thoughts ceased as the music began. Aesthetic in tastes and sensibility, Mrs. Lawton was genuinely affected by the tide of melody that swept through the house. Hope, regret, a vague and exquisite pain—all flooded her soul, and when the last strain of the first piece died away, Mrs. Lawton's eyes were filled with that same emotion which Sondheim had seen in Judith Kelly's eyes so long ago.

It was at that moment that Sondheim turned his face towards the part of the hall, very near the platform, where she sat. It seemed to him that the fifteen years rolled suddenly back and he stood beside that girl again, drinking in that look from her eyes. At that instant she did not look to him a day older, only more attractive. His eyes flashed a recognition which she could not mistake, and the next instant he recalled all, and his lips writhed beneath his beard with a contempt that had grown and strengthened with his days since then.

"So she has come to hear Seraphael again," he whispered, as he bent over the pages of his music, and in that instant was born the purpose which he followed with inflexible will.

Those who listened to him that night thought his music strangely wild and triumphant, while it held a chord of dreariness in it.

He did not look especially at Mrs. Lawton again, his glance wandered coolly over her as over others, and she could not decide that the thought of her stirred anything beyond indifference in his mind. That he had recognised her she knew.

"And how was the concert, Mrs. Lawton?" her husband asked at dinner the next day.

"Beautiful!" she said, with just enough of emphasis; "Mr. Sondheim was incomparable."

"Sondheim?" said Lawton, looking up from his nuts. "I had really forgotten the name of the musician. Is it the Sondheim I met during our courtship, my dear?"

"The same."

The words were spoken in her usual tone, and no

particular expression was upon her face, but she knew her husband was looking at her keenly, and she felt something like hatred towards him for it. She was in a mood not ordinary, and which she could not explain.

"Indeed!" said Lawton, with a prolonged inflection. "Is he to remain any length of time?"

"I don't know, I am sure," she replied, growing inwardly angry, she knew not why.

"Shall we look out for some particularly sharp sparring about now?" he asked, with a disagreeable smile.

Mrs. Lawton struggled to maintain an even temper, and succeeded.

"Your terms are quite unintelligible, Mr. Lawton," she remarked; "but if you are talking about Sondheim, I'm afraid you'll be disappointed, for really, I don't expect to see him."

"Did he know you?" asked Lawton.

"I think he did."

"Ah! If you were a betting woman, my dear, I would ask you to stake something on the subject of your seeing this fellow again. He was hit pretty hard that summer."

Mrs. Lawton made some trivial reply, and at last diverted her husband from that topic.

And Sondheim? He went to his hotel that night, and after half-an-hour's nervous pacing of his room, he sat down and wrote to the committee of a neighbouring town who had written to engage him for a series of concerts.

"I have decided not to enter into more engagements at present," he wrote, "for the next few months, at least I shall do no professional work." And managers and committees implored in vain. He went into society, and was petted and lionised; he was a bachelor, and was subject to numberless manoeuvrings, but he bore himself so as to become still more popular if possible.

For a month it happened that he did not meet Mrs. Lawton; she had been unexpectedly called out of town. But one night a friend came up to him and took his arm, saying:

"Mrs. Lawton is here—pray let me present you, for you must know her—and you are invulnerable, you know."

"Does one need to be invulnerable to know her?" asked Sondheim, as the two pushed through the crowd.

"I should think so," was the reply, "though it's hardly her fault—it's about as sure as fate that a man who knows her intimately will be more or less in love with her."

"And she's not a flirt?"

"Bless your heart! no. Or if she is, it's an entirely different way of doing things."

Sondheim smiled to himself, and did not reply.

"Mrs. Lawton," said his companion, "let me present Mr. Sondheim to you."

Mrs. Lawton was sitting by the side of a gentleman in a window recess, and had not noticed Sondheim's approach, and a slight colour suffused her face as she extended her hand in greeting.

Unconsciously she looked to see some sign that he had met her before, but she saw none. Sondheim saluted her with graceful politeness, and stood by her chair a few moments, then moved indifferently away.

Those observing gray eyes followed him as he walked, and noticed with whom he spoke, and his manner as he did so. Try as hard as she could, she could not realise that this self-possessed, cool man was the same who had loved her so passionately—and indeed he was not the same, and had never been since that time. But he was better than she was, though he fancied that he did not now possess the power of loving. No thrill went through his veins as he again touched her hand and met her eyes. He did not seek her again that evening, and it was a week before he met her again; but when both were in society, they could not but meet each other. The next time was at a ball, and without any apparent effort, Sondheim found himself near Mrs. Lawton, and with an air that seemed to say he cared but little whether she accepted or not, he asked for the next waltz with her.

Something in his manner stung and irritated her, and a refusal was on her lips, and he saw it, and at that moment caught her glance in his, and in that blaze of deep blue light was some power that made her willing to yield.

"Not the next, I believe," she said, looking at her tablets, "but the one after."

He bowed, and silently moved away as a gentleman came up to claim her.

Why was Mrs. Lawton disturbed and unhappy? she whose soul seemed only made for light and fleeting impressions. She dreaded, and yet she desired the waltz with Sondheim, and when it began she could not have analysed her emotions, save to fancy in a disturbed way that she was under some kind of a spell. His arm held her firmly

to him, he held her hand in a close clasp unlike the light touch usually given, and his eyes, as often as possible sought hers with something that seemed like eagerness. But his words were formal and few, and he did not hint at the old days.

When he led her to a seat, and left her, without lingering a moment to chat, she suddenly found the men who lounged about her so stupid and insane that she could hardly be polite to them. She felt a sudden sinking of spirits like one who has inhaled some exhilarating gas, and finds it leaving them. She was not used to anything beyond the calm pleasure of her society life, and any such rise or fall of emotion almost alarmed her.

She had herself too thoroughly well in hand to reveal any such thing, and the people near her, thought Mrs. Lawton a trifle more interesting than usual if anything.

Now she met Sondheim constantly; but it never seemed as if he sought her, and he never attempted to monopolise her attention, and never saw her alone.

If any noticed at that time, they might have seen that Mrs. Lawton's usually too pale face was now flushed by a varying colour—that her eyes shone with a brighter light, and her whole manner held something feverish in it. Notwithstanding all her self-control—which perhaps had been due greatly to a lack of feeling—the colour came to her cheeks, the brilliancy to her eyes, when Sondheim appeared, and she struggled hard not to appear restless until he came to her side.

At last her change of manner was noticed, and the inevitable comments passed upon it. The gentlemen said she was ill, that a hectic fever was about her; the ladies looked at her in amazement, and noticed that there was a difference in her when Sondheim approached, and they discussed the fact of great length and with much enjoyment.

But Sondheim had spoken no word with peculiar emphasis, had not sought an audience alone. Indeed, he always scrupulously came when it was her hour to receive callers; but one day, it happened for the first half hour of his visit she was alone.

She sat in a large chair by the window, her fair hair in half waves about her face, and hanging loosely behind, a book in her hand in which she was vainly trying to become interested. The imperative ring made her heart throb with such suddenness that she pressed her hand hard upon it, compressing her lips in anger at herself as she did so. She managed to recall something of her usual manner by the time he entered.

He glanced hastily about the room, and half hesitated as he advanced, saying:

"Is it possible that I have mistaken your day for receiving visitors? I will not intrude if I have done so."

"Don't be alarmed," she said, rising with a smile, and giving him her hand. "It is my day, and I fancy it will not be long before you'll be relieved from a *l'été-à-tête* with me. I'll ring for a servant now, if you'd be more comfortable."

"Pray don't," he responded, answering her laugh, and detaining her where she stood, covering her hand with both his own. "It's the very first time I have seen you alone."

He looked at her with that strong, concentrated gaze that now made her colour waver and her pulses throb. She could not help thinking that it was his fault that they had not thus met before. She was conscious, even in that instant, that she would have deemed any other man insolent and insulting who had so held her hand and bent upon her such a look, but she could not think him so; she could only stand there, spellbound by some magnetic force, wishing for the cool smile and biting word with which she would have effectually stopped such a scene with another.

There came another ring at the door. Sondheim hastily raised the hand he held to his lips and kissed it almost fiercely two or three times, then he turned hastily away, and when another visitor entered the moment after, he was coolly looking over some pictures on the table.

Not so cool was Mrs. Lawton; there was a perceptible flutter in her manner which enraged her beyond words. Was she becoming like a girl in her teens, to be moved by a man who looked at her with such fiery eyes? As a girl in her teens she had never known any such emotion. Mrs. Lawton had always thought herself extremely moral—not taking to account in a moral sense the fact that she made so many men so hopelessly in love with her—that was only amusement with her, as betting and racing were with her husband. And now sitting with fingers still burning beneath that man's kisses, she did not for one instant think that she stood on the verge of a precipice at which even she might shudder. She was only conscious that life suddenly had for her an interest more intense than she could have imagined before.

CHAPTER II.

What!—you had given your life away
Before you found what life most misset.
Forsworn the bridal dream, you say,
Of that ideal love, whose kisses
Are vain as this is!

FROM that moment when he had met her thus alone, there was a marked and observable difference in Sondheim's manner to Mrs. Lawton. He did not maintain his indifferent appearance, or attempt to conceal from others the attraction which drew him always to her side. He was always bending over the chair, he called upon her daily, he drove and walked with her. Had Mrs. Lawton been less vitally interested she would have been vain of the conquest she had made; but as it was, she did not think of it—did not care that she had won Sondheim's attention when everyone was striving for it.

Though Sondheim sought her, his manner was such that she almost doubted if that passionate moment had really existed, and that very indifference of his increased her infatuation. In the weeks that followed she suffered more than she had thought she could suffer, and all the while he managed in some way to blind her to the real condition of her life.

The thin face, the brilliant and hectic flush, and more than all, perhaps, the whispers he had heard drew Lawton's attention seriously to his wife.

She rang the bell immediately after lunch one day, and ordered the carriage while her husband was there.

"Do you go out to-day?" he asked, in surprise, looking at the steady rain falling outside.

"I wish to see those pictures at C—'s," she said, negligently, not even looking at him as she replied.

"But it's a bad light to-day," he persisted. And she looked up in surprise, and said satirically: "I am sure I'm very grateful for your interest—unless you forbid me, I shall go out."

"Of course I shan't forbid you. Do you meet anyone at the studio?"

"Mr. Sondheim will be there I think. He has a marked catalogue which I should like to see."

She spoke very steadily, and her husband was not a sufficiently keen observer to detect the difference of tone in which she said the name "Sondheim," and which she could not help for her life.

"I have no doubt of it," he said, with a harsh smile and intonation; then moving uneasily in his seat beneath her steady gaze, he went on:

"Now I have the opportunity I should like to say something about this Sondheim and my wife."

Mrs. Lawton arched her eyebrows in such a surprised and scornful way that it was very hard even for a brazen fellow like Lawton to go on, but he managed to do it.

"I don't care for your flirtations in general," he said, slapping the table rather forcibly, "but this affair is getting scandalous. When the cool Mrs. Lawton flushes and trembles at the approach of a man in such a way that the crowd notice it, and when that man is never two feet from her in public, it's time somebody did something about it."

Judith Lawton controlled herself admirably, though one phrase in her husband's talk cut her to the heart. So the crowd noticed her manner, did they? A pang of shame and joy thrilled through her.

She leaned her arm easily on the table opposite her husband, and said:

"Is that all you have to say?"

He started up, stung to madness by her manner. "No, it is not," he cried, with an oath. "I have that to say and do that you'll hear of before long! But I won't waste my words on you!"

And he went out of the room, leaving his wife weak and white. She sat down quickly, with only one fear in her heart—that harm would come to Sondheim.

She knew Lawton too well to think that he would fear to perform the threat, and she knew that lenient as he was, when he was roused nothing could stop him. Humiliating as it would be, she must warn Sondheim, and she hurriedly dressed for a ride. She looked at her watch; she was late. If Sondheim should go before she came, for every minute seemed an age until she could see him.

She glanced eagerly about. Few were there this stormy day, but her heart gave a bound when she recognised the slender figure in a distant part of the room.

She was by Sondheim's side immediately, and when he glanced at her face, he exclaimed in a low voice:

"What is the matter? What have you to tell me?"

She could not see his face, but it had a strange expression upon it; an indescribable blaze leaped to the eyes, and to the bearded cheek. The old power of this woman's personality was not gone for him, he found, but mingled with that attraction was some-

thing that made him reckless in regard to her, that destroyed all respect for her; that was tinged with fierceness and revenge. It was a combination of feeling hard to explain, harder still to control, though he had succeeded in the latter wonderfully well, but it was for a purpose, and perhaps now had come the time to throw that check-rein from him. He would see.

Mrs. Lawton hesitated. What she had come to tell was very hard to say.

"I hardly know how to begin," she said, at last, "it must seem so very foolish to you, but I assure you Mr. Lawton is seriously in earnest. In short, I wish you to go away for awhile."

"Mr. Lawton threatens me, does he?" asked Sondheim.

"Yes; and you must leave here," said Mrs. Lawton, her voice vibrating with fear and anxiety.

Sondheim made a motion with his hand as if he threw all caution and restraint from him. He took her hands, looking at her with his blue eyes darkening and kindling, his whole face aglow with passionate feeling.

"I will not go, I will not leave you," he said, his closely clasped hands, his glance, his voice, all magnetising her to a mood that made her his, for the time at least; that made all things swim before her in an indistinct way, and brought to her vision a future over which lay the warm haze of a passion and love too sweet, too intoxicating.

Still she struggled to say:

"But you must go; I cannot, I dare not see you again."

With that fatal admission, her eyes drooped as if unable to meet his, her lips burned scarlet, and trembled with the words she uttered.

"I cannot go, I cannot leave you," he said, drawing her closer to him until her head was upon his shoulder. "You must not drive me from you. Go with me—a happier life awaits us both; the long past shall yet be redeemed."

"This was the first time he had ever referred to that past. Mrs. Lawton could not repress a convulsive shudder; it is possible she had more dignity of character in one way than the man beside her gave her credit for. His words brought a blush of shame to her face, and she endeavoured to withdraw herself, but he held her closer.

"I shall call for you to-night," he said, pressing in upon his advantage, "we will go to the concert as we had planned, but we will not return."

A long silence followed these words. The tempted woman was fighting the first real battle of her life, and it was easy to guess that the tempter would be victorious.

"Do you doubt me? do you distrust me?" he asked, forcing her to meet his glance, and reading in those gray eyes something that told him of victory, and that made him at the same time almost regret his work, for those expressive eyes told of anguish unutterable, as well as of a wild happiness.

"I do not doubt you. I trust you with more than my life," she whispered. "Be merciful to me."

He uttered an incoherent exclamation of emotion.

An hour later, and Mrs. Lawton had reached her home; she went directly to her room, and when the servant came to tell her that a visitor had arrived, she said with unwonted irritability:

"I cannot be disturbed, I have a terrible headache."

She locked her door and flung herself on the bed, her mind reeling with the thoughts that possessed it. To-morrow at that time, all the world would know that she was a disgraced woman. But was not happiness worth even that? And this was her first taste of happiness. She was not a profound woman, she had not been a very true woman, but every heart holds within it the power of at least one awakening to an overwhelming emotion, and the hour had come to her.

She lay with her hands clasped over her head, her thoughts hurrying to and fro in a disorder that nearly drove her frantic, while underlying everything, was a forbidden and guilty love. She had promised to go with him, and she could not regret it. Life here had now grown unendurable.

She longed for, and yet she dreaded the time when she should leave the house that night for the concert, leave it never to return. She did not know how she should endure the suspense, the waiting, until then, and she earnestly hoped she might not see her husband again. Then at thought of him came the old fear that he would seek out Sondheim. She did not know that Lawton was then on the way to Sondheim's hotel.

Lawton walked along doggedly, and trying to arrange his thoughts. He felt that he should be at a disadvantage in the coming interview, for there was a suppleness, a satiric grace about Sondheim that was particularly offensive to such a man as Lawton. He had not liked the young musician when



[THE LAST MEETING.]

he had paid court to Judith Kelly, but he had taken very little notice of him then. Now, while all his stalwart frame was quivering with anger, he dreaded the time when he should be shown into Sondheim's room. But he had no idea of retreating, and in a few minutes he was standing before the musician, who, after greeting him, waited quietly for him to speak.

At last Sondheim said:

"To what cause shall I ascribe the honour of this visit?"

Those smooth, musical tones put the finishing exasperation upon Lawton. His fingers clenched themselves together over his hat, and he said in a fierce whisper:

"To the determination to give you a horse-whipping, sir!"

"Indeed!" smiled Sondheim, taking a step nearer his guest and looking at him with such lightning in his eyes that Lawton, though not intimidated, felt that he had before him a man who would be, as he thought, a "tough subject."

"Just that," said Lawton, "and I've determined to do it now."

Angry as Lawton had been when he entered the room, he was raging now, and his burly frame seemed to warrant him in thinking that he would be successful—though, in truth, he did not think of that, or of anything save a burning desire to do that man a terrible bodily injury.

He suddenly aimed a blow at Sondheim's head, but the latter was too quick and stepped aside, but as he did so a scarlet spot began to glow on either cheek, and he sprang forward, and his clenched fist dealt Lawton such a blow square upon the temple that the burly figure fell like a lump of lead to the floor. Sondheim stood over him a moment, quivering and panting, his fierce rage growing less and less, though a curl of contempt came to his lips.

Then he turned and rang the bell, and as the servant entered, he said in that coldly indifferent tone, as if he were speaking of a dog:

"Call a carriage and take that man home. Don't make a noise about it; do it quickly."

The man, who was Sondheim's own servant, stared in frightened amazement at the body on the floor, and he faltered out:

"Is he dead, sir?"

"Stunned, I think. Go."

During the few minutes that followed, Sondheim walked up and down the room, occasionally glancing at the figure of Lawton. Once he held some ammonia to his nostrils, but it had no effect. Sondheim had been going to the bad very fast lately, but he felt pangs of remorse as he waited for the removal of Judith Kelly's husband. Would his revenge be worth the misery it would bring him? He did not love Mrs. Lawton, and the attraction she had for him would not last a month, while she—she would then have lost everything for him. At that thought Sondheim muttered:

"And did she not spoil the whole world for me? Blight my youth—make the world a sham to me? Let her reap her reward! She loves me now!"

And Sondheim's face darkened, his lips closed tightly.

The fallen man stirred, groaned slightly, and struggled to his feet, and with his hand to his head, glared round him. At sight of Sondheim his memory returned.

"You will hear more about this," he said, fumbling for his hat, and cursing the weakness that prevented him from springing again upon the man who stood there in such graceful ease.

"Just as you please. I'm perfectly willing to knock you down again," said Sondheim, who was beginning to hate the man before him.

At this moment the door opened and the servant appeared, saying:

"The carriage is ready, sir."

Sondheim turned to his guest and said:

"I ordered a carriage for you, thinking you might not be able to walk home; it is now waiting for you."

"No sir," said Lawton, grasping a chair, and looking back at his host; "I can get away without your aid. I swear I'll punish you within twenty-four hours!"

Despite his irritating self-possession, the next few hours were the most miserable Sondheim ever spent. Not that he cared for Lawton's threat—he forgot it immediately, for he did not lack for personal courage. But now that a successful revenge was so close at hand, he shrank from it, for he was not naturally a bad man. Since his renewed acquaintance with Mrs. Lawton this idea had taken possession of him like the mania of a monomaniac. Had he really felt a passion for the woman his repentance might have lingered much longer. Now regret and remorse grew stronger and stronger within him.

His face softened, his eyes lost that glittering, steely look they had worn so much of late. Obeying an impulse, he sat down at his writing-table and wrote rapidly; then, reading over the sheet, he uttered an impatient exclamation and tore it across, and not until five or six trials did he seal up and address the following lines:

Mrs. LAWTON:—I asked you to forgive me, and when you have read this, you will know how very much you have to forgive in me. I know that not the least will be your wounded pride, the shame of having consented to my pleadings. And if you care for me, as I think you do, your soul will writhen when I tell you that I do not love you. I must say it thus plain, or I shall not deem it fully done. Whatever of personal attraction you may have for me, it is not sufficient to call it love. I have deliberately wooed your love for revenge for the pain I suffered one night long ago. You will remember; what my misery was then and long after I hope you will not fully know. I had resolved to follow my revenge to its uttermost, to consummate it by a flight with you, but on the very eve of that event I hesitated and faltered; it is too terrible a thing to do, and in withdrawing, I save you from the most terrible fate that can befall a woman—that of being deserted in her shame. Do I talk plainly? I must do so. I will not intentionally see you again. My servant will give you this at the concert where you expected to meet me. I shall remain in town a few days longer, but you need never fear a word or look from me. I am bold to ask your forgiveness—but perhaps one day you will grant it, as I, at this late time accord it to you for my unhappy years. I feel that though I love you not, it is your face and voice that have spoiled all others for me.

SONDHEIM.

Mrs. Lawton was at the concert, and even a casual observer would have noticed the dreadful pallidness of her face, the ill-restrained restlessness of her movements.

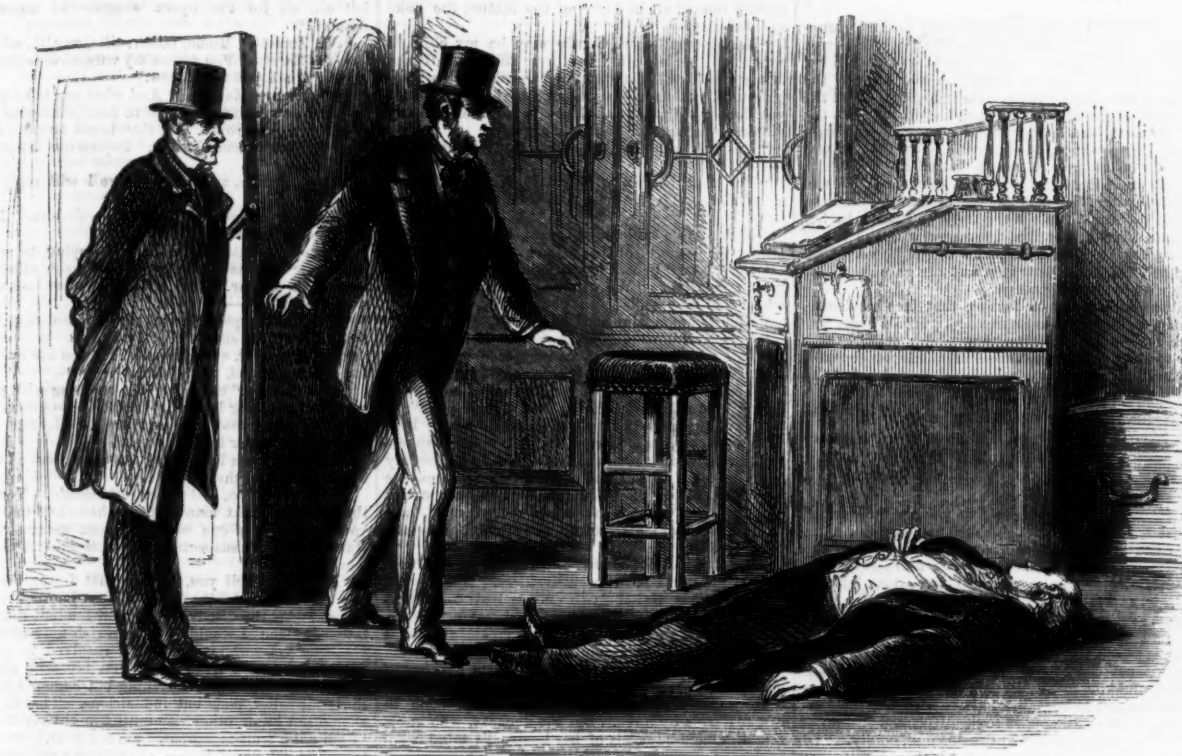
It was at intermission that the note was brought to her. Try as hard as she would she could not bring herself to open it before that crowd where were many acquaintances. She rose and went unattended to an ante-room, and standing beneath the gas jet she read Sondheim's letter. She could not be paler than she was, but a curious grayness was added to the pallor, and her lips parted as if her breath would come through them. How she got home she never knew, but she did not go back to the concert. The first news that greeted her arrival at home was that Mr. Lawton was ill. "Something like an attack of brain fever, I think," the doctor said, and she heard him in a stupor, and made no reply, going directly to her room. What was it to her that her husband was ill? What indeed was anything in the world to her?

She was only conscious of a blind and desperate desire for unconsciousness. She hastily counted some drops of laudanum, swallowed them, and flung herself on the bed, sinking almost instantly into a half slumber, and then into a deep sleep. She had not the courage to face her misery and inward shame, and for days she kept herself under the influence of opium. Her husband was not dangerously ill, though he was kept to his bed, from the fever that his excitement and the blow had induced.

Sondheim waited in town a few days for the appearance of Lawton, for he did not care to have that gentleman boast that he had driven him away; but every moment that he stayed was torture to him, and at the end of the week he left, vowing never to set foot in the place again, and he has kept his word.

Mrs. Lawton, though she goes into society as usual, never flirts now, and there are lines in her face brought there by a single experience, and she turns with a shudder from one page in her life's book, thinking she would give many years to be able to blot it out.

C. E.



[THE DISCOVERY.]

THE BIRTH MARK.

CHAPTER XIV.

ALFRED RAYMOND, on leaving the house of Inez de Parma, entered his carriage and ordered the coachman to drive rapidly to his father's office.

"My father may not have returned to his house, though the hour is late. I will lay this matter before him," he mused, "for immediate action. He has a secret power over this Laura Parnall, or whatever her true name may be, and has promised to exercise that power for my happiness. She sets him at defiance, however. Doubtless Carola is now a prisoner, and unless we act speedily to release her this woman will force her to marry Robert Kampton."

When the carriage halted before the office, the young gentleman sprang out, somewhat surprised to find the door open and the premises dark.

He entered the front office, and striking a match, lighted the lamp nearest at hand. With this he entered the private office, where he instantly perceived his father lying upon the floor.

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Alfred, "he has been murdered!"

He placed the light upon a desk and was about to raise the body to look at the face, which was pressed against the floor, when some one behind him said, quickly:

"Wait! I am used to this sort of thing."

Alfred turned, and beheld Mr. Flaybank, a personage whom he had never seen before.

"Friend of Mr. James Raymond, I am—who are you?" said the detective, who now wore the garb of a priest.

"Alfred Raymond—his son."

"His son!" ejaculated Mr. Flaybank, whose hand was already upon the wrist of the lawyer. "Your servant, sir—my name is Flaybank—just employed by your father to-day, to hunt for the burglar. This is more serious. He lives. I see. Bad blow. Skull fractured. Some men recover after worse. Better have a surgeon."

Mr. Flaybank raised his eyes and saw that Alfred had left. As soon as the young man heard the detective say that his father was alive he had hurried away and sprung into his carriage.

"To Dr. Storie's! Drive fast!" he cried to his coachman as he sprang in.

Mr. Flaybank being left alone began his habitual scrutiny of the office, holding the lamp close to the floor as he did so.

"Lawyer writing—man crept in—hit him with—

what? That is it. Hit him with what? Blunt weapon—hammer, perhaps. Ah, spot of blood on the wall. Oh, another spot behind the bookcase—will look after that. What is this?" he said, as he picked up something. "Lancet case? Lawyers do bleed their clients, but not with lancets. Silver plate on lancet case. Letters engraved. 'R. K.' Who is 'R. K.?' If owner of this lancet very likely a doctor. Now let's see how that spot of blood got on the wall behind the bookcase."

The detective soon found the stick. He examined it very closely, and after wrapping it in paper, deposited it in a side pocket of his coat and went into the outer office, where he used all his powers of detection.

He had scarcely completed his examination when Alfred Raymond hurried in, followed by the surgeon.

The latter, after a careful examination of the lawyer, turned to Alfred and said:

"The fracture is serious, yet he may recover. That is, he may live, though I cannot promise that his mind will ever be fully restored. He must be removed very gently to his bed as soon as possible. Procure a litter, or something of that kind. Meanwhile I will do all that I can."

It was not long before the lawyer was carefully borne into his own house and placed in his bed, and, as medical attendance was being administered to him, the detective led Alfred aside and asked:

"Had your father many enemies?"

"He had few friends, for his disposition was cold and reserved. Yet I do not know that he had any very bitter enemies—at least none who would murder him."

"Think for a moment, sir. Has he lately prosecuted anyone severely?"

Alfred reflected before he replied:

"Yes. A man was accused by a woman of having stabbed her husband, and my father conducted the suit against that man."

"Was that man a doctor?"

"He was. Then you have heard of the case," said Alfred, surprised.

"Never," replied the detective. "Were the initials of that man's name 'R. K.?'"

"They were; but I do not understand—"

"Wait. Is he a tall man?"

"Quite so. Fully six feet—perhaps more—in height."

"With small feet—dresses fashionably?"

"Yes, sir; but—"

"And wore diamond shirt-studs?"

"I believe he does. He dresses very expensively."

"Well, I found in the private office a lancet case; in the front office a diamond shirt-button. They may belong to some of the clerks. Any of the clerks named 'R. K.?'"

"No. The man I mentioned is named Dr. Robert Kampton."

"Then he should be arrested at once. Here is the lancet case, and here the diamond shirt-button. And here is a package of papers—one of them marked 'private.' The package fell from your father's pocket when he was lifted up. Take charge of the papers. I will attend to Dr. Robert Kampton."

As Alfred took the package of papers the detective glided from the room.

The young gentleman opened the paper marked "private," deeming that it was of present importance, as its back was dated on that day, and hoping that its contents might cast some light upon the mysterious assault. As he read it a deep flush of mortification darkened his face.

The paper was the duplicate of the contract which his father had made that day with Isabella, Duchess of Ossiri.

For the first time Alfred learned that his betrothed was probably the daughter and heiress of a duke.

He was mortified to discover that his father had speculated upon the bereaved love of a mother for his sake. Of proud and generous nature, he could not stoop to accept this contract. He loved and revered his father, who, cold and haughty to all the world, was kind and affectionate to him; yet he was deeply sorry that this contract had been forced upon a noble lady, a grieving mother.

He had never heard of the duke and duchess, yet the date and freshness of the contract proved that at least the duchess was then in England. He had no doubt that Carola was the lost countess, for he knew the careful acuteness and great prudence of his father. He now comprehended why his father urged him to marry Carola and to defy Inez de Parma. But unless he could find the evidence of the birth of Carola he could not prove that she was the Countess Perdita. Neither could he compel Inez de Parma to surrender her.

The dangerous condition in which his father was lying demanded all his care and attention, yet he felt that Carola was also in peril.

The news of the condition of the lawyer had spread rapidly among those with whom he was connected, so that all his clerks were soon calling for positive information at his residence.

In conversing with them Alfred learned that his father had that day visited Senora Goliari, the for-

tune-teller, a fact which astonished him very greatly.

He resolved to proceed immediately to the fortune-teller's. It flashed into his mind that Inez de Parma had swooned suddenly while Carola was describing some mysterious person whom she had seen in the house of the fortune-teller. He remembered also the keen eagerness with which Inez had listened to the conversation, and hoping that he might learn something of importance, he entered his carriage and was speedily on his way to Senora Goliari's.

Although the night was far advanced, he was admitted after his card was presented to the duchess.

She received him with stately politeness in her parlour. It was her first interview with the son of James Raymond, with one who might be very soon the husband of her daughter, and she gazed upon his face with piercing scrutiny.

She was pleased in finding that face handsome, manly, and lofty in its expression. If his heart was hard and mercenary like that of his father there were no signs of a depraved nature in his countenance.

Alfred Raymond was astonished to see a lady so noble and stately, when he had expected to find a withered, sallow-faced, cunning-eyed, hypocritical, dissipated impostor.

"Senora," he said, addressing her in Spanish; "I ask pardon for my intrusion, but a lamentable accident compels me to ask if my father has been here to-day?"

"He has. Is it possible that you are uninformed of the results of his visit?" asked the duchess.

"I hope that what has happened is not one of the results of his visit. He has been murderously attacked. He may be dead, for I have just left his bedside, and to me he seemed dead, though the physicians said otherwise."

"And you, his son, have not learned what took place between your father and me—the contract?"

"The contract!" exclaimed Alfred. "I do not understand you, lady. Do you refer to the contract which purport to be—ah, I have it with me," he continued, drawing the paper from his pocket.

"I mean that," observed the duchess, coldly. "Of course you consent to its provision?"

"What right have you to ask, sonora? Are you a friend or an acquaintance of the Duchess D'Ossiri?"

"I am the Duchess D'Ossiri."

"And I am the Duke D'Ossiri," said a deep, rich voice behind Alfred.

The young gentleman turned and beheld the mysterious personage so minutely described by Carola.

But the duke was no longer clad in velvet, but clothed as a gentleman. Neither was he insane, for, as Diego Gomez had averred, he had waked from his slumber sane. His dark eyes were sad, yet clear and rational.

"I am the duke and this lady is my duchess," he continued. "It seems that heaven in its infinite mercy has given us strong hopes that we are soon to recover our long lost daughter. I am permitted to regain my reason, as I have often regained it before now, but to lose it again. I have read the contract entered into by your father and the duchess. I know James Raymond never liked me, yet I did not believe that he could take so ungenerous an advantage of an unfortunate lady."

"His son destroys the contract," exclaimed Alfred, tearing the paper into fragments. "It was made without my knowledge. There is much of your speech which I do not understand—yet there is one thing which I do know, and that is this: Alfred Raymond cares nothing for rank, title or wealth in her whom he loves. She may be countess or peasant but to me she is Carola, my betrothed wife."

Glances of surprise and pleasure were exchanged by the duke and duchess.

"I have always been an obedient son," continued Alfred, proudly; "but I cannot consent to do anything which I consider dishonourable, or even ungenerous. It was for this contract, then, that my father came here?"

"No, Senor Alfred," replied the duchess, "he did not know that the fortune-teller was the duchess. I sent for him to ask his advice."

"He is, as I said, terribly wounded and perhaps dead or dying," said Alfred. "If I can aid you in what he had undertaken I am ready. Carola is at this moment detained by force in the house of Inez de Parma. She may be your daughter, yet you have no proof, no evidence. Still, as Inez de Parma intends to force her to become the wife of her nephew, and will doubtless do so to-morrow, if you have any shadow of evidence upon which you can claim Carola as your child, do so immediately."

His words filled the hearts of the duke and duchess with intense anxiety and alarm.

The action of James Raymond had convinced them that he, cold, cautious, scheming, firmly believed Carola to be the lost countess. The heart of the duchess told her the same, and the hopes of the duke

led him to believe it. When Alfred had briefly and rapidly related all he knew of the matter, the duke exclaimed:

"Young gentleman, Carola may be my child, I cannot tell, for my mind has been afflicted. If she is my child I will not stand in the way of her happiness. If she is not, my sympathy for her and for you demands that she shall not be sacrificed to any villainous scheme of Inez de Parma."

"Yet she can legally resist your interference—"

"For that I care nothing. If Carola is imprisoned she shall be rescued, law or no law," said the duke.

"My lord, this excitement is dangerous," exclaimed Diego, who entered at this moment.

"No. It will benefit me," replied the duke, with great animation. "We will rescue Carola, no matter whom she may be."

"This is not Spain, my lord."

"Gold is as powerful everywhere. If in rescuing Carola I offend the law I can appease its officers. You, Diego, must know a few bold spirits in this city."

"Yes, my lord. I can quickly select a score of daring fellows, ready for anything, if well paid."

"Have them ready at once. This haste of Inez de Parma to force Carola to marry her nephew smacks of deep rascality, and Carola may be my daughter; the assault upon James Raymond may be but a part of her plans. Perhaps those who struck him down did so that he might be silenced, and to rob him of his power to prove Carola my daughter."

This idea had not occurred to Alfred, and it now struck his mind with peculiar force. He at once perceived that if Robert Kampton had committed the assault upon his father more than mere revenge had prompted the deed. With rapid mental argument he concluded that Kampton had done the deed, while Inez de Parma treacherously kept him in her parlour.

He eagerly embraced the duke's proposition to rescue Carola by force. But the duchess, who knew that the lucid intervals of her husband's mind were seldom of more than a few hours' duration, trembled, lest some exciting scene might increase the violence of the malady from which he had suffered so long.

Yet the urgency of the case, and the fear that Carola, who appeared to be her lost child, would be forced to marry the nephew of Inez de Parma, held her silent. She remembered the visit of a man in the morning, whose resemblance to Inez had amazed her, and she rightly concluded that he was Robert Kampton.

While awaiting the return of Diego the duke related to Alfred the life of Inez de Parma in Spain; but Diego soon returned, saying:

"My lord, I have collected half a score—a party on a carousel. We can gather as many more on our way."

"We are not to march against the house like an army," said the duke. "Go tell them to scatter, and to lie in wait near the spot. When I give the signal, let them rush into the house by front and rear. The signal will be my old war cry of Spain—St. Iago!"

Diego departed, and the duke, with Alfred, was about to follow when—but we must first return to the fair Zaretta and Leonto.

CHAPTER XV.

ZARETTA had scarcely entered her private parlour, after casting off her bonnet and mantle, when her female attendant told her that a gentleman was at the door.

The prima donna turned and beheld him who had signed himself Leonto, after those impassioned words:

"I have given up all to follow you, Zaretta. Will you again say to me 'you are too rich. I cannot marry you?' All, I have left all."

She had intended to receive him reprovingly, if not coldly; but the dictates of her heart melted her resolves. As Leonto, after one glance at her beautiful and blushing face, sprang toward her, exclaiming: "Zaretta! my life!" she bounded into his arms, speechless with emotion.

Her attendant, a simple Italian girl, though ignorant of the whole affair, seemed to highly enjoy the delight of the lovers, and as her joy began to explode in Italian ejaculations, Zaretta remembered her presence.

"Ina, retire to my bedroom, and if you value my favour do not speak of what you have seen."

"Oh, I swear by the virgin!" began Ina, but an imperative glance and gesture of her mistress hurried her away.

"At last, Zaretta, at last I see you again," said Leonto, gazing rapturously into her dark eyes, eyes more brilliant, more lovely than ever. Nothing brighter beautiful eyes so charmingly as love and joy."

"And you, my Leonto! Is it true that you have left all, all for the opera singer—the nameless Zaretta?"

"All, Zaretta. Home, father, title, wealth, all for love and Zaretta. You will be my wife, now darling?"

"I will tell you to-morrow."

"To-morrow, Zaretta? And what can take place between now and to-morrow to determine your decision. To-morrow! Ah, that is not far off. See, it is after ten o'clock already. To-morrow is not two hours off."

"True, Leonto, and after twelve I will reply yes or no."

"You are expecting something, Zaretta. Rosa Baetta—where is she?"

"Listen, Leonto," said Zaretta, trying to speak calmly. "We have not spoken to each other for more than a year. For months we have not even seen each other—"

"Yes," interrupted Leonto, rapidly, and snatching a kiss from her cheek. "I have seen you every day, every hour, every minute, for you are ever in my heart, my soul, my mind, my—"

"There, there," cried Zaretta, blushing with pleasure, and pressing her snow-white fingers upon his lips. "I know that our hearts are one, Leonto, and that we can never be happy apart—"

"Happy! I can be nothing but miserable. I cannot live!" cried the lover.

"Listen, Leonto, or I never can explain. You are the son of a great man—ah, you have told me that your father was one of the richest merchants in Italy, but I have suspected that he is greater than a merchant."

"Did I ever tell you, Zaretta, that I was the son of a rich man, until that prying Rosa Baetta pretended to make the discovery? Well I admit that my father is rich. I would have been rich too—perhaps I will be yet—who can say? I resolved to marry for love alone. I determined that my wife should never know that I was anything but Signor Leonto, the fruit-seller, poor but industrious. That is, she should not know otherwise until I might say to her, 'I am not a fruit-merchant, I am not poor, I am very lazy, and my name is—ah, why do you gaze so earnestly at me, Zaretta?'"

"To learn your name. Is it not shameful that I should love one whose real name I do not know?"

"It is not shameful. It is delightful, and therefore I adore you, Zaretta. But marry me and then you shall know my name. You are not like many. When Rosa Baetta said to you: 'That young man is very rich. His father, at least, is a great merchant,' you turned this enchanting face from me. You told me you were too poor to marry a rich man. You would never—"

"Enough, Leonto. Rosa Baetta also discovered that your father was a nobleman, of what rank she did not learn, perhaps a count or a baron. I said if I, a simple opera singer, became your wife your family would despise not only me but you. I would not consent to that, Leonto. I would never degrade the man I love."

"You would honour a throne, my Zaretta."

"In your eyes and heart, but not in those of a haughty Italian family. But something may happen before twelve o'clock to-night which will permit me to say, 'Leonto, will you marry me?'"

"As if I would not die rather than reject such happiness," exclaimed Leonto. "But this something—what is it, Zaretta?"

"I have great hope, Leonto, that I am about to possess a right to a name, a noble name."

"Ah, for your sake I rejoice. Yet tell me more."

"If my hope is not false, my true name is Perdita, and I am the daughter of a Spanish duke."

"A countess! The daughter of a Spanish duke! What duke?"

"The Duke Ferdinand D'Ossiri."

"Of my uncle?"

"Is he your uncle? Then it is true that you are of noble blood?"

"Yes, I am, but I have forsaken my position, and everything else for you. But if your hope be true, Zaretta, there is more trouble before us. The duke and my father were once deadly foes."

"What—and brothers?"

"Brothers by marriage only. Why wait until some unexpected obstacle may arise to separate us for ever, Zaretta? Consent to become my wife to-night?"

The door of the parlour was now suddenly thrown open and Count Rocco, followed by his secretary, Dr. Harlin, and four stout fellows, entered hastily.

"Ah, my father!" exclaimed Leonto, springing to his feet; "what does this mean?"

Zaretta, pale and trembling, also arose, and as she heard her lover exclaim "Ah, my father," her heart beat fast and painfully. This was the first time that she had ever seen Count Rocco, and she gazed upon his noble, though angry countenance with strong emotion.

The count, angry and stern, did not deign to cast a glance upon the opera singer. His eyes, haughty and flashing, regarded Leonto with a stare of scorn and authority.

Leonto had become very pale, yet he returned the gaze of the count with a haughtiness not inferior to his.

"By what right do you and these persons invade the privacy of this apartment?" demanded Leonto, with an air of command never perceived in him by Zaretta until that moment.

"By the right of a father," replied the count. "By the right of a prince."

"A prince? Sir, I am of age, and duke in my own right, and no subject of the Prince of Agareo," said Leonto, haughtily.

"You hear his raving, doctor?" said Count Rocco, turning to the physician. "He is mad, as I told you. He is my son, plain, simple Leonto D'Estella, yet he imagines himself a duke, and rambles over the world amid a thousand follies. He escaped from the gentle control of his relatives in Italy, and at last I, his unhappy father, have found him—"

"Mad! Do you, prince, dare assert that I am mad?" demanded Leonto, indignantly.

"You see, he calls me 'prince,'" said Count Rocco, shrugging his shoulders. "I am his father, a simple Italian count, and he calls me prince. His madness is of long standing."

"Father!" exclaimed Leonto; "I have long known that you would not hesitate to resort to violence to prevent me from marrying the woman I love, but I never dreamed that Lorenzo D'Estella, Prince of Agareo, could stoop to coin a deliberate lie."

Count Rocco's dark face became almost black with rage, and he advanced angrily towards his son. But his watchful secretary respectfully checked him, whispering:

"My lord! Be calm. He is your son, but he is also an independent prince. You see that he has learned that fact."

"Back, Gavetto! Some day he will bless me for preventing his marriage with an opera girl," replied the count, fiercely. "I would sacrifice my life rather than see him disgraced."

"He does not appear insane, sir," whispered Dr. Harlin, whose rat-like eyes had closely observed all. "Would a thousand pounds in your hands make you see better?" asked the count, in the same tone.

"For what time?"

"A week. Within that time I will remove him."

"Not less than five thousand. The risk is too great."

"Very well. Five thousand."

"Take him. Bind him. He is mad," said Harlin to his four assassins.

The assassins, brutal fellows who knew that individually they were not responsible, as all their assaults and captures were done by medical authority, advanced towards Leonto from four points. Indeed, the experienced servants had taken positions of attack immediately upon entering the room.

They advanced with a rush, simultaneously, and though two went down before the fists of Leonto, he found himself bound in an instant.

"If you cry out I must use the gag," said Harlin.

"Stay!" exclaimed Zaretta, grasping Harlin's wrist. "You are an impostor, a wretch. You are the man who acted as clerk in the office of James Raymond. It was you who accompanied Rosa Baetta to see the Duke D'Ossiri. Ah, I fear treachery there."

"The Duke D'Ossiri!" said the count. "Is he in England?"

"Yes, and probably the father of this lady," replied Leonto, indignantly. "You know that he lost a daughter many years ago, at nearly the same time that you lost your own."

Count Rocco now turned his eyes upon Zaretta for the first time. As he gazed he started, and grasping the arm of his secretary, whispered:

"Gavetto! Tell me. Whom does she resemble? Speak."

"My noble lady, the wife of your highness, in her youth."

"True. Rosa Baetta? That was the name of that scoundrel's mistress. Pedro Diaz! Ah, we met him to-day. He stole my child. Your true name. Your history," said the count to Zaretta.

"I have no name, sir. I believe that I am the lost daughter of the Duke D'Ossiri!"

"And why his daughter? Do you know Pedro Diaz?"

"It was he who stole me from my parents when I was an infant, sir."

"Who told you that?"

"Rosa Baetta."

Count Rocco and his secretary withdrew apart and conversed rapidly in whispers. What they said was unheard by the others, but the colloquy ended with these words:

"It will not harm Leonto to be under restraint for a few days, Gavetto. If he is free he will marry this beautiful girl, and great Heaven, she may be his sister! If I tell him that my heart leads me to suspect that his Zaretta is my lost child, his own sister, he will not believe it. He will regard it as a trick. I dare not free him after this outrage. I have been too hasty—"

"Ah, my lord—"

"Do not reproach me, Gavetto. I have acted madly. It is I, and not Leonto, who should be in the clutches of this scoundrel physician. If I free him, he will regard me only as an enemy—and an enemy whom he cannot strike. He will marry this girl—is she not beautiful! Is she not the image of the princess?"

"And of the Duchess D'Ossiri, my lord. You are too hasty—"

"It is my incurable infirmity—so say no more about it," said Count Rocco. "I must keep Leonto confined until the affair is clear. Is she not beautiful! I do not wonder that Leonto is infatuated. Doctor, bear away your patient."

"Prince," said Leonto, "I hate you, I scorn you, I disown you! I will not remember that you are my father, when I am free again. I will never forgive this outrage. Gavetto, cool, slimy villain, your life at least shall pay for your part in this conspiracy. You know that I am as sane as you or the prince—but why deign to revile a viper. Zaretta, never fear for me—"

"I do not, Leonto," she said; "I know that heaven will defend the right. The doctor is a villain, and he shall answer to me for the person of Rosa Baetta."

"Mr. Raymond will satisfy you—Mr. James Raymond," said Harlin.

"James Raymond is dead, or dying," said one of the assistants.

Dr. Harlin grew ghastly pale. If that was true, who was to stand between him and the law?

"Dead! How is that?"

"Struck down in his private office, about nine o'clock, sir."

"The devil! then I will have to fly the country. This is serious. This young lady has a dangerous eye, and means mischief. I will hasten home and compromise with Rosa Baetta, if possible."

Having thus resolved, the doctor whispered to Count Rocco:

"I have not received my usual fee in advance, sir."

"Ah, true. How much am I to pay?"

"One half to-night; the other half to-morrow."

"Pay him, Gavetto," said the count; and then, as the secretary and the doctor withdrew for a moment, he approached Leonto, who was conversing with Zaretta.

"My son—"

"It is not possible that I am your son," interrupted Leonto, with sarcastic bitterness. "I must have been the son of an honorable gentleman, for at least I am truthful. If I am unfortunately your son, I regret it."

"I appear harsh—"

"Harsh? No, but brutal, savage, atrocious!"

Count Rocco paced the apartment in gloomy thought. He loved his son, and he respected with hereditary pride his rank. Two years before he had learned that his son had become infatuated with the beauty of an opera singer. At first he paid little attention to the matter, for he supposed it the folly of a moment. But one day he learned that his son had actually asked the opera girl to become his wife.

This intelligence had inflamed the pride of the haughty old noble, and he hastened to interpose his authority to crush the affair. To his surprise and chagrin, Leonto bluntly avowed his determination to wed Zaretta, and suddenly disappeared from Italy.

The opera singer had already left that country, and the old count immediately conceived the belief that a clandestine marriage was in view by the lovers. Zaretta he believed to be one of those designing female adventurers who seek to entrap foolish young men, heirs of the rich, into secret marriages. Leonto he believed to be completely infatuated.

He pursued his son and had traced him to England, to the apartments of Zaretta.

To gain possession of his person he had determined to represent him as a madman, and having deceived the proprietor of the hotel, the latter was eager to see Leonto secured, as he believed him insane.

The landlord had mentioned Dr. Harlin as the proper person to secure the young gentleman, at least temporarily, until the count could have him transported to Europe, and thus it was that the rascally physician had been roused from his couch to aid in the affair.

While the count paced to and fro, Gavetto and Harlin returned.

"Bear away your patient," said the count; and

then gazing upon his son with significant solemnity, he added:

"I believe that I am right in what I am doing, and that you, Leonto, will agree with me ere long."

"It is never right to play the tyrant," replied Leonto, severely. "As for you, sir doctor, you obey this man at your peril."

"I can meet it," said Harlin, as he felt his pocket heavy with gold. "Take him to the private entrance of the hotel, men—"

"No rudeness, no injury to the young man on the peril of your life," whispered the count.

"Certainly not, sir. I am a perfect lamb to my patients. Move on, men. He makes no resistance."

Leonto glanced at Zaretta. She was pale, yet her eyes and features expressed indignant resolution, as she said, solemnly:

"Leonto, I will soon rescue you, and no longer refuse to be your wife."

(To be continued.)

AGATE.—This is an exceeding hard mineral or stone, of which there are several varieties. Its most remarkable feature is, that when cut and polished, the internal figures represent some plant, animal, or human design, such as that of a fortification. The fortification agate is found at Oberstein, on the Rhine, and also in the north of Scotland. On cutting it across the interior, zig-zag parallel lines are seen resembling a military fortification around a city. Mosses and lichens are also found in agates. These are called the moss agate. They are mounted as brooches and the caps for scent-bottles, by the Edinburgh jewellers.

The discovery of two new diamond fields—those of the Cape and of Victoria—has come in good time to meet the demand. The East Indian supply has long since declined, and the markets have of late years been dependent on Brazilian. On the whole, the fashion for diamonds has declined in Russia, Turkey, Spain, and Portugal, though a rise was created by the fashion in Paris under the Empire and in the United States. Diamonds used to be, in disturbed countries, for the middle and higher classes, a resource for hoarding in political troubles, which gold and silver furnished to the lower classes. The improved political condition of many countries has diminished both modes of hoarding. For small diamonds or diamond dust for trade purposes the want has increased, and the price sometimes reaches £800 per ounce.

DR. LIVINGSTONE.—Notwithstanding the doubts and fears entertained by many as to the safety of this renowned traveller, it is cheering to find that the experience and judgment of Sir Roderick Murchison lead him to firmly believe in Livingstone's reappearance. "I have such implicit confidence," Sir Roderick writes, "in the tenacity of purpose, undying resolution, and herculean frame of Livingstone, that, however he may be delayed, I hold stoutly to the opinion that he will overcome every obstacle, and will, as I have suggested, emerge from South Africa on the same western shore on which he appeared after his first great march across that region, and long after his life had been despaired of." It may be that the veteran geographer's prognostication springs in some measure from the strong wish which he is known to entertain for Livingstone's safety, and there can be no one but will most heartily rejoice if it should prove correct.

PENNY RAILWAYS.—The promoters of a system of "Universal Penny Railways" have matured, and now submit for public consideration, a scheme by which, as they believe, the so-called "impossibility" of penny railways may be overcome. The basis of the plan is, of course, the assumption of all the railways by the State. By a number of economical changes in the management of the traffic—for example, by doing away with tickets in the case of third-class passengers, who constitute two-thirds of the entire bulk of travellers by railways, and by the institution of "stop stations," the projectors of the scheme expect to produce results of the most startling character. In the "People's Class," passengers will be conveyed from London to Holyhead for 1s. 6d.; from London to Edinburgh for 1s. 11d. At a "stop station" the traveller will leave the train, and if he desires to go further will go through an "on room," and pay a toll of one penny to the next station. By the diase of tickets, &c., the promoters hope to save an enormous sum.

IMPROVED CABS.—The Council of the Society of Arts offer the following medals for improved carriages specially suited to the metropolis: The society's gold medal for the best and most convenient open hackney carriage for two persons. The society's silver medal for the second best ditto. The society's gold medal for the best and most convenient closed hackney carriage for two persons. The society's silver medal for the second best ditto. The society's gold medal for the best and most con-

nient hackney carriage for four persons, either open or closed, or both. The society's silver medal for the second best ditto. Lightness of construction, combined with adequate strength and durability, will be especially considered in making the awards. The awards will be made after actual trials of the carriages extending over a certain period. Communications describing the carriage must be sent to the secretary of the Society of Arts before the 1st January, 1870, the carriages to be sent to a place hereafter to be appointed. The council also offer the society's silver medal for the best instrument to be affixed to a cab or other hackney carriage, for indicating the fare as between the passenger and the driver, whether by registering the distance travelled or otherwise, and which instrument shall also indicate, for the convenience of the cab-owner and of the driver, the total distance travelled during the day and the total amount earned. The instruments competing, with full descriptions of their construction, to be sent to the society's house before the 1st of January, 1870. Competitors may, at their option, sign their communications, or may forward with them sealed letters containing the name and address of the writer. The council reserve to themselves the right of withholding all or any of the medals, in case none of the carriages or instruments possess, in their opinion, sufficient merit. In the trials of the several carriages the small amount of vibration and noise will be duly considered by the judges.

SCIENCE.

THE North London Railway Company owns twelve miles of line, which cost 3,308,417*l*.

A SEVENTY-FOUR gun wooden ship consumed in building 8000 loads of timber, the produce of a century's growth of 57 acres.

THE Metropolitan Railway Company hold nine miles fifty-four chains of miles of their own, and two miles seventy-seven chains partly owned by them, together twelve miles fifty-one chains. The capital expended on these amounts to 46,739,731*l*.

DURABLE CEMENT FOR IRON AND STONE.—M. Pollack, of Bautzen, Saxony, states that he has used, as a cement to fasten stone to stone, and iron to iron, a paste made of pure oxide of lead, litharge, and glycerine in a concentrated state. This mixture hardens rapidly, is insoluble in acids (unless quite concentrated), and is not affected by heat.

A BRIDGE across the Clyde forms the most important and difficult engineering work upon the City of Glasgow Union Railway. It is constructed upon the lattice girder principle, and notwithstanding its great strength it is light and graceful in appearance. From abutment to abutment the bridge is about 600 ft. in length, a distance attained by seven spans, which are supported at their junction by octagonal piers. The piers rest upon iron tubes which are carried down through some 70 ft. of sand, forming the bed of the river, until solid rock is reached.

DR. ANGUS SMITH has experimented on smoke of various degrees of blackness and brownness, and he shows that the difficulty of consuming smoke does not commonly arise from a deficiency of air in the furnace, but from the fact that a rapid draught often fails to allow time for proper combustion. It is now certain that the black smoke prohibited by Act of Parliament contains carbonic oxide, one of the most poisonous of gases. Carbonic oxide is only detected in smoke of the illegal density, and when we find that this black smoke is really an expensive article to produce we seem to be furnished with every reason why such a nuisance should be prohibited.

HAMMERING IRON UNTIL IT IS RED HOT.—In his lectures on "Heat," delivered recently, Mr. G. F. Rodwell alluded to a singular case of motion transformed into heat; namely, the rendering of iron red-hot by repeated strokes of the hammer. If Mr. Rodwell, who is so well versed in the history of science, will turn once more to the works of Robert Boyle, he will see that this "father of chemistry" had notions of the transformation of mechanical movement into heat very nearly akin to, if not quite identical with, those professed at the present day. Robert Boyle alludes to the rapid development of heat in an iron nail by repeated blows of the hammer after it has ceased to travel into the wood. It has been asked whether iron could be hammered cold until it became red-hot. Mr. Rodwell informs us that it can. Having requested a blacksmith to try the experiment, a piece of very tough iron was hammered with a moderately heavy hammer; it became hot, but would not scorch a piece of paper. It was then hammered by two men, one of whom used a sledge hammer, but with no better result. Presently a man who was working in the shop said he had often lit his forge fire by this means before

matches were plentiful. He took a nail such as he used for horseshoes, and, after hammering for less than two minutes with a light hammer, part of the nail was brought to a bright red heat. The blows were light but frequent, but the nail was partly turned at each blow.

HERR HILLER has described a new and advantageous method of tinning copper and brass, which, he says, is decidedly more advantageous than the old process, by means of tin and cream of tartar, though this generally gives very satisfactory results. In the new process fifteen parts of salt of tin are dissolved in 150 of water, and to this is added a solution of thirty parts of caustic potash in 300 parts of water. The various objects to be tinned are placed on a sheet of tin, shaped like a funnel and pierced with numerous small holes. This is placed in another vessel containing the above solution, and the whole is heated over a fire whilst the objects are stirred with a tin rod. In the course of a few minutes they are covered with a thin layer of tin as white as silver.

MR. DANCER has studied the character of the solid particles contained in the air of Manchester. Samples of the air were washed by Dr. Angus Smith, and the fluid was afterwards microscopically examined by Mr. Dancer. A single drop of the water was computed to contain no less than a quarter of a million of fungoid spores. The fact was verified by examining an extremely small particle, and multiplying the result. The bottle of water having been kept for thirty-six hours, the quantity of fungi, already so great, "visibly increased," and on the third day minute creatures were observed moving in the fluid. Keeping, however, to our former figures, we find that that 150 drops of water would contain more than 37,000,000 of the fungi, these 150 drops being the washings of 2,495 litres of the air of Manchester, which is about the quantity of air passing through the lungs of a man in ten hours.

LUNAR CHANGES.

ON the south-west of the lunar formation *Hipparchus*, is a mass of high land which has every appearance of having been elevated above the surface much in the same way as the large bosses of Devon and Cornwall, of which it may be regarded as a lunar analogue. The elevation of this mass is considered as the first recognised change. Crossing this high land in a certain direction is a "fault" coincident with a portion of one of the principal rays of *Tycho* which extends beyond the *Mare Serenitatis*. The evidence of the posteriority of the formation of this "fault" to that of the high land is unmistakable on Rutherford's photograph of the 6th of March, 1865. The third change to which allusion is made in the Report is that of the opening of a crater on the high land just south-west of the "fault" of between 16 and 17 miles in diameter. The evidence of the posteriority of the production of this crater to that of the "fault" consists of the furrowed sides of the crater cutting through the "fault" on the north-east. The fourth change is that of the production of several valleys on the east of the high land; the fifth, the production of a line of cliffs of considerable extent, which abruptly terminates the high land on the north-east. The posteriority of the formation of the cliffs is consequently unquestionable. Next came the protrusion of a crater of about 23 miles in diameter, which obliterated in its immediate neighbourhood the furrows upon the east flank of the crater to the west, and choked up the valley to the east. The order of succession of the two craters can, therefore, be as well established as the order of succession of two geological formations on the earth. The last change in this remarkable and interesting lunar region is that of the elevation of a mountain wall on the edge of a neighbouring crater with which it is quite unconformable. These changes are strictly in accordance with what we see on the earth, and have nothing in them of an extraordinary character. W. R. R.

INVENTION FOR SUPPLYING A CITY WITH HOT AIR.—Experiments are being made by a gentleman who has worked for many years in the United States armoury for supplying a city with heated air. It is proposed to force air rapidly through a coil or series of iron pipes heated in a furnace, and then to a greater length of pipe outside, made of fire-clay, which is claimed to be about the best non-conductor that can be had. The first trial will be with a pump of eight-inch diameter and eight-inch stroke, and the clay pipes, now making in New York, will be 300 feet in length and of a four-inch bore, with a thermometer at each end, which will indicate 600 degrees. The projector expects to heat the air in the iron pipe to that temperature, and force it to the farther end with little force. If the pipes are laid in the street it will be necessary to have them enclosed in a brick arch, lined with mortar made of fire-clay.

It is contended, if the thing works according to the expectation of the projector, that but a small portion of the coal now used will be necessary for all heating and cooking purposes, which will be a great thing in these days of high prices of fuel.

THE Queen's autograph letter, by which she intimated her intention to present to the Royal Academy her bust, the work of her daughter, the Princess Louise, has, by her Majesty's permission, been deposited in the archives of the Academy. The bust will be placed, we believe, in the chief exhibition room.

CLAMP BUTTON.—The ingenuity of mechanical invention has come to the relief of buttonless bachelors, and a clamp has been contrived, adapted to all sorts of buttons, by which they are put on instantaneously, and so firmly and neatly, that they defy time and strain to wear them out. The fastening, and the boxes containing clamp, tongue, and disk, are to be had at three halfpence a dozen.

WHEN King James threatened to remove the capital from London to Oxford, the Lord Mayor only hoped His Majesty would not take the Thames with him. In America, an agitation is beginning for the removal of the capital from Washington. Westerners advocate St. Louis as the best locality, but others hold New York to be the one and proper place. Nobody at Washington hopes anything after the fashion of our Lord Mayor.

NEWSPAPERS IN ITALY.—In 1868 the total number of newspapers published in Italy was 842, in 115 towns. Six were published in Frenza, viz., 2 at Aosta, and 4 at Florence; 1 in English at Naples, 2 in the Neapolitan dialect, 2 in Piedmontese, 2 in the Venetian dialect, and 1 in Genoese. The greatest number of newspapers are published at Florence, viz., 126; then Milan, with 104; Turin, 82; Naples, 76; Genoa, 47; Venice, 29; Bologna, 29; and Palermo, 27.

THE exact altitude above sea-level is often required by engineers and meteorologists. The following is the height above the level of the sea of the ground on which the English cathedrals are built, according to the Ordnance survey records at Southampton, viz.: Lichfield, 237ft.; Lincoln, 217ft.; Durham, 215ft.; Salisbury, 153ft.; Exeter, 129ft.; Winchester, 125ft.; St. Asaph, 124ft.; Ripon, 114ft.; Chester, 88ft.; Worcester, 87ft.; Carlisle, 82ft.; Bangor, 68ft.; Bristol, 63ft.; London, 61ft.; Gloucester and York, 57ft.; Chichester, 47ft.; Canterbury, 38ft.; Rochester, 33ft., and Peterborough, 31.

THE FIGURE FIVE.—Any number of figures you may wish to multiply by 5 will give the same result if divided by 2, a much quicker operation; but you must remember to annex a cipher to the answer when there is no remainder, and when there is a remainder, whatever it may be, annex a 5 to the answer. Multiply 464 by 5, and the answer will be 2,320; divide the same number by 2 and you have 232, and as there is no remainder, you add a cipher. Now take 357, and multiply by 5, the answer is 1,785. On dividing this by 2, there is 178, and a remainder; you therefore place a 5 at the end of the result, which is again 1,785.

THE KILLING OF GAME IN FRANCE, which the French call *la chasse*, has commenced, and many thousands of men, accoutred in queer guise, with gigantic bags and guns, have been stalking about fields and in woods blazing away gunpowder at feathered and four-footed creatures. In France the passion for *le sport* is perhaps more widely developed than in any other country—at least in no other do so many people buy game licenses, without which partridges and hares cannot be legally slaughtered—and yet game is very scarce in France, scarcer perhaps in proportion to her size than in any other country in Europe except those of the extreme south. Then, why are the French so fond of shooting? The answer is, that they think it an aristocratic amusement, and that, though they are a democracy, they affect to be aristocratic in taste.

NEW GAMING ACT.—An Act was passed at the close of the late session to provide for the prevention of gaming in public places in Scotland. It is enacted that all chain-droppers, thimblers, loaded-dice players, cardsharps, and other persons of similar description, who shall be found in any public place, or in any grounds open to the public, or in any public conveyance, in possession of implements or articles for the practice of chain-dropping, thimbling, loaded-dice playing, card-sharping, or other unlawful gaming, or who shall in any such places exhibit such implements to induce or entice any person to engage in such game, may be convicted before a magistrate, and be sentenced to imprisonment with or without hard labour for 60 days, and be ordered to restore money or other property obtained, and in default be committed or detained for a further term not exceeding 60 days, with or without hard labour.



EVELYN'S PLOT.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I felt it smite me like a blow,
Through all my limbs a shudder ran,
Giving intolerable pain. Longfellow.

It was late on the following day ere Mr. Mordaunt's breakfast was ordered. And scarcely had the meal been served with all the abundance and luxury of a *déjeuner à la fourchette* on the Continent, ere the advent of a visitor suddenly interfered with its discussion.

"If you please sir, Mr. Osborne wishes to see you," was the announcement, that accompanied the fragrant Mocha, which was served in a massively carved silver coffee-pot.

An exclamation more forcible than polite was on the lips of the gentleman. But it was swallowed between the mouthful of lark pie, and the draught of coffee that washed it down. So the only audible reply was, "show him in." And in a minute more the lover of Edith was hushed into the room.

"Well, Mordaunt what success? Somehow I could not sleep, and I am here with—not exactly the lark, but with the lark pie yonder, to know my fate." Mordaunt hesitated.

"Of course, my dear friend, sit down and have a morsel of the said lark pie, and a cup of this immensely fine Mocha, and then we can talk. I am but just up, and I am never myself till I have satisfied the cravings of an empty stomach, especially after a few hours at *écarté* and *rouge et noir*. They're wonderfully exhausting, eh, Osborne?"

"To the purse, certainly, but I have yet to learn their effect on the digestion," replied the visitor carelessly; "as to myself I am uncommonly regular in my habits, could not have got on else—necessary food, and no excess, that's the dodge, eh, Mordaunt?" And he gave no bad mimicry of his companion's tone and manner.

Mordaunt reddened.

But he had too much at stake to venture to resent the rude insolence of manner, and he took refuge in an affected laugh.

"Certainly, my dear fellow, certainly. Hope you will prove that it is so in the present case. You won't find any of the dishes despicable I fancy. I pay the best wages of any man in Baden, to say nothing of Paris, and I ought to be well served. Let me help you to some trifles."

And he busied himself in attending to the real or supposed wants of his companion.

Mr. Osborne was certainly no deceiver. He ac-

[THE NOTES DESTROYED.]

cepted all that was offered by his friend, and commenced an attack on the dishes with an appetite that would have delighted even the cook in Diarrell's "Taucered," who was forced to give warning because his dishes were not appreciated by his too intellectual master. He bestowed a very decided and engrossing attention on the various dishes of which he was so reluctantly compelled to partake, and did not even disturb the proper business of the hour.

But when due respect had been paid to the viands, and the meal nearly exhausted in its varied attractions, he turned to the expectant and somewhat uneasy host.

"Well, Mordaunt the deuce take it, but you have a brick of a cook, and I think you must make him part of the fair Edith's wedding portion, eh? I will double whatever you give him to reconcile him to the change."

Mordaunt laughed uneasily.

"If you will, of course if you will. But my good friend, when the cloth is removed have something to say to you, and if you are at all in haste, we can adjourn to another room, for I should not like what I am about to say to be overheard."

"By all means, places don't alter confidences, that's my maxim. If you are at all inclined to make any other apartment the theatre of the *dénouement* it's all the same to me. I am not at all particular, only don't waste any more time. It's tiresome waiting between the acts."

And he laughed constrainedly.

"Certainly, certainly! This way, then. It's very seldom that I introduce anyone to my private sanctum, but, as you say, it's no matter when a friend is in question, and under present circumstances I cannot hesitate."

Osborne smiled.

"The deuce I did! I didn't know I said anything of the sort, but it's all the same—all the same. Don't be at all disturbed, my good fellow. I'm prepared for anything. I don't suppose you're such a fool as to let me slip through your fingers, but I can quite see that the silly chit may feel some sentimental scruples about age, etc. Parcel of nonsense, but still—but still, we mustn't be astonished."

And again he gave a short laugh, and prepared to follow his companion from the room.

They went through a small, very narrow passage from the room where they had been breakfasting, which conducted them to a much smaller apartment, that scarcely deserved the name of more than a cabinet, but which, like the rest of the house, was fitted up in a gorgeous manner.

An exquisite easy chair, that seemed made for

Morpheus himself; a writing-table, fitted up like an ambassador's, most convenient and luxurious apparatus for business; a few rare cabinet pictures; a cabinet of old Indian workmanship; a small couch, and one or two other lounging chairs, constituted the furniture of the room. But the carpet was noiseless in its thick, soft folds, and the door was guarded by an outer one of green baize and an inner curtain of the heaviest velvet.

At last these doors were securely closed, the curtains drawn, the chairs placed in juxtaposition to each other, and then Osborne waited for a few moments for his companion to begin.

"Come, out with it, man. She refuses to have anything to do with me. That's it, is it not?"

Mordaunt looked calmly at him. And the rapid glance satisfied him of one thing—namely, that the best mode was to preserve the blunt frankness towards his guest that accorded with the tone that he had thought proper to take.

"Well, then, Osborne, to be brief, she has. But that's all nonsense. I have pledged my word, and will keep it, and there's my hand on it."

He extended his hand, which was but coldly touched by his companion.

"There, man, don't look glum," he went on. "I'll tell you the whole story, if you'll clear up and listen. And if anyone has a right to draw a long face, it's rather me than you."

And he gave a significant nod.

"Go on," was the brief reply.

"I told you," began Mordaunt, "that the girl is not my niece. Indeed, I've cheated her there a bit, for one of her cards was to tell you that little episode supposing that I had deceived you. But I know better than to try that game on with such a sharp fellow as you."

And he laughed bitterly.

No reply, and again he was forced to proceed without any encouragement.

"But I told you truly enough that I had a shrewd notion of who she is, though it would spoil sport to tell just now; and, indeed, I have not data enough to go on—to repeat my grounds of suspicion. But so it is. I don't for a moment doubt that she comes of a family that would not disgrace anyone—I don't mean titled, perhaps, but quite as good, and in many respects a great deal better."

"Don't doubt you, my friend," observed the merchant; "but still it is as well to be frank in these matters, and if you've no objection, I'd rather know all that you do in the matter. I am as close as wax, that you may be sure, and as to—"

"But you said you did not care a straw, so that

you could get her at all!" interrupted Mordaunt, eagerly. "It won't make her a bit less worthy to be at the head of your table, eh, and no one need know besides ourselves."

"True enough, true enough!" said the man; "but still a man likes to have some idea of whom he is marrying, at least, if such an idea is to be had, and—"

"And," again interrupted Mordaunt. "I tell you once more, Osborne, that I cannot tell you till the day you marry her what my suspicions may be."

"Listen to me and I will explain. I have a purpose in life rather deeper than even that of making a fortune, or enjoying the luxuries that are to me the very breath of existence. And that purpose is connected with that girl and her presumed parentage. As I told you I rescued her from a company of strolling players, where she acted as a dancing-girl. I was struck with her beauty and graceful movements. I inquired into the facts of her case, certain that she could never come honestly or lawfully into the keeping or custody of such a scampish crew; and from what they told me I felt convinced that her parentage was connected with a strange and miserable story in my earlier life, and which, as I told you, is mingled now with the great purpose which I will accomplish before I die. And it was on that account that I gave more than I could then at all spare for the child, who brought them in a pretty deal more than the whole troop besides, and afterwards lavished a good many of my spare bank-notes on her education and training. But still I am not certain—not at all certain. I must find one person before I can get the clue, and then I shall decide the point one way or the other; and if the child is not the one I take her for, I have no more idea than Adam who she really is. And that is how matters stand now, and till I hear something more, I will not give a hint to living creature, if he were a hundred times a lover, or husband either."

The millionaire listened gravely.

"I can't see at all the force of it," he said. "If I promise to take the girl any way, I don't see how it can signify whether she is Edith Jones or Edith Smith, or—"

"She is neither one or the other, I can promise you?" said the guardian, significantly.

"Then why not tell me plump out. It would display confidence, and if you don't show it, perhaps I may follow suit," was the reply.

"I cannot help it. I have made up my mind for a sufficient reason. Edith is beautiful enough and graceful enough to make her own fortune and her own terms. If you do not like to take her I shall open negotiations elsewhere."

"And my bond?"

"Would soon be taken up," was the rejoinder.

There was a pause. Then Mr. Osborne began: "I don't approve of your principles, Mordaunt, and I'm not at all sure that it is a correct one for me to go upon in such a serious matter as matrimony. And, by way of showing you a good example, I'll tell you a bit of my earlier life, and what I want now to do. Then you'll see that all is above board with me, as far as Edith is concerned."

There was indeed an apparent frankness and honesty in the man's manner that for the moment atoned for the plainness and the vulgarity of his usual tone and his plebeian appearance.

"Well," he said, "it's just this that I've got to say, and I'm not ashamed of it either. Years ago, when I was a youngster—I'm not going to say how many, when I'm just about to marry a young wife—but years ago I started in life with but one friend—or whatever you call him, in the world. We came from the same part, and when I first went to London I sought out Mark Danvers as the person most likely to help me in the course I was about to begin. I knew he had been tolerably lucky, and I thought he might put me in the way of it also. But though he didn't fail me, that I must say, in giving me a helping hand, I saw that he was above making a friend of me, and still more of expecting that I should at all equal him in any way, whether in fortune or in position in life. And that galled me. Galled me more than it ought to have done, perhaps, because, you see, I was younger and far more humbly born than Mark. But when I found my feet, as you may say, and knew that it was only a question of time whether I became his equal, if not his superior in wealth, then I began to consider whether I was always to be kept at a distance, and whether I could not find a wife and set up an establishment as handsome as Mark's was."

"He had a sister, a beautiful girl as ever wore gold in her hair, perhaps prettier than my Edith—mine, hump! Well, we shall see. But I knew it was no good to think of her, for she had as many admirers as she had dresses and was about as changeable in her taste for one as the other. But presently her choice seemed to be made quite suddenly, perhaps Mark made it, for it was one of his great friends

whom he married her to, and, as everyone soon got to know, one whom she did not care for one jot. Well, the end of the matter was, that just as I was beginning to be counting thousands instead of hundreds as my yearly income, just then deep trouble came upon Mark, deep enough for me to forgive him for all his pride and queer usage. His sister ran off with a handsome scamp of an old lover, his wife died while he was away looking after the fugitives and trying to console the unhappy husband and save his runaway sister from a villain's power. But I suppose trouble rather touched his head, for the next rumour that got about was that the house of Mark Danvers and Co. was slaky. But it died away again, as all such reports do if the crash does not come in a short time, and everyone thought it was a canard or that all had tided over with them. But I didn't think so. I had my own reasons for my opinion. And I wouldn't have held a thousand pounds of his bills at that time except I had used them to light my cigar as waste paper."

"Well, I had at last occasion to be tried. A large bill with his name was presented to me for discount. I took it provisionally, appointing the holder to call again on the morrow when I would give him an answer. So I had my own reasons then, which I need not tell you now, but I determined to use it as a sort of touchstone and, to tell you the truth, as a pleasant sort of revenge for the haughtiness he had shown me. I'm not a devil, Mordaunt, but I'm not to be played with. And if a man does me a favour he must not throw it at me with a pitchfork. Well, I went to his office. I was denied. Mr. Danvers was not within. I was determined to see him so I went to his house, and there I met the same fate. Mr. Danvers was not within. But I was not to be thus put off."

"I happen to know that he is at home," I said at a venture. "I saw him come in with my own eyes, and if you will not take him up this card I shall complain of your insolence when I see him in the morning. It is an urgent business."

"So I gave him my card and a sovereign at the back of it, and then he gave me a wink as if I were to trust him and he would do his best. I whispered to the fellow never to mind. If he lost his berth I'd get him another, and then I followed him close. He knocked at the door. No answer. A louder knock, and then the door was half-opened by the fellow on a nod from me, and I saw the man I came to visit sitting at his table with a heap of papers before him. He had on a dressing-gown and slippers, pale as death, and with his eyes fixed, not on the paper, but on the queerest-looking object I ever saw to attract a man of sense when at the eve of ruin. It was a ring, a green serpent set in Indian gold, and strange, devilish eyes which seemed to glance at Danvers with a sort of triumph. He had a small, two-bladed penknife in his hand, and he was going to grasp the ring, just as I went in the room, I suppose, to dash those devilish eyes out of its head. I know they would have put me in a fury if I had been in his place. He looked up, and his face got like those eyes as red, and angry, and blood-shot."

"Leave the room," he thundered. "Robert, you will not stay another day in my service for this. Leave the room, Ralph Osborne. Are you come to send me mad? There's no occasion, I think it will be here soon enough."

"And he laughed so wildly that I really thought I'd better get the penknife out of his hand as soon as I could for my own sake."

"Don't excite yourself," I said, "It's all my own doing. Mr. Danvers, I insisted on making my way to you, and I nearly knocked the fellow down in my road when he tried to stop me. Come man, don't be a fool. I know, or rather I guess, that something is wrong, and I don't say I can put it right, for I am not going to ruin myself for you, nor any one. But I don't mind risking a little, and what's more I believe my head's cooler than yours just now, so if you will just let me look into your matters a bit, I think you will be none the worse, and may be somewhat better."

"Well to make my tale short, I got his cholera down a bit, for the sake of his children rather than his own, for he said he really did not care a pin's point about his own life, now that he had lost the two that he cared for most in the world, his wife and his sister. But it is a queer trial that can make a successful man disregard his good name, and in time I got him to be rational, and to promise to let me examine his affairs, and see what could be done."

"But," said I, "what in the name of demoniac wild Indians is that queer snake you've got there?"

"He flushed up."

"Never mind," he said; "that ring has a fate, I believe. I once saved a life which it had almost destroyed, and in ten minutes more, if you had not come in, I believe I should have been a corpse."

"Then you'd better let me have the thing and dash it to pieces," I said, slowly.

"No, no; it's a trust—a sacred trust," he said. "Don't be afraid. It's over now, and I shall not be so mad again. At least, you've shown me that there is some good feeling and gratitude in human form."

"I don't pretend to that," I said; "only if I can help you without ruining myself, so much the better; but I'll take security, never fear, before I begin."

"Well, I did look into his affairs, and I found they were only disordered for want of looking into during his troubles, and that if he could get relief temporarily he might tide over the whole. But two things were arranged before I began. One was that if he could not repay me the sums I should advance before his little daughter was seventeen, I should have his permission to address her as a suitor. I believe he consented as a mere form, for he must have seen pretty well that it was all quite straightforward unless things went very adverse. And another, that I was to take charge of a sealed packet which he believed to contain valuable property."

"It was sent to me as a repayment of a debt from an anonymous borrower," he said; "but I was not to open it for ten years, when the whole circumstances of a disgraceful transaction should be forgotten and the actors passed from the scene."

"Such had been the directions to him. And he placed it in my hands as a sort of actual security."

"And you have it still?" whispered the listener, eagerly, as the narrator paused.

Ralph Osborne stared.

"Do you want to finger it?" he asked; "do you want to finger it, Mr. Mordaunt?"

"Why—oh, no; only it seems such a very romantic incident, that I thought the explanation must be very interesting, like your story."

"Well, you can't have the pleasure then," said the other, bluntly, "for the simple reason that the conditions on which I was to keep it did not occur. Mark recovered himself as soon as he got his old energies about him, and became a richer man, I believe, than ever. Anyway he repaid me with interest, and I gave him back the packet when I received my money."

"And the daughter?"

"Oh, she died a few months after the bargain was made, though I don't suppose from any infantile dislike of her future suitor. And it was that which brought out this story. Ever since then I made up my mind to wait till that time—the time when the girl would have been sixteen, before I began to court any other, so as to fancy as it were that the bargain had been carried out. The worst of us have a bit of romance in us, you see, Mr. Mordaunt."

CHAPTER XIX.

They come, the shapes of joy and woe,
The airy crowds of long ago;
The dreams and fancies known of yore,
That have been and shall be no more.
Yet, ere my lips can bid them stay,
They pass and vanish quite away. *Longfellow.*

MR. MORDAUNT had listened with singular interest to this tale; a proof that there must indeed have been something that especially struck him in the recital. For—albeit, not at all a man of quick sympathies, nor of a romantic nature, he yet betrayed a most extraordinary and rapt attention to the narrative.

His eyes had been at first fixed earnestly on the narrator; then he lowered them and turned away, as if to hide from the gaze of the other what might be the feelings excited by his tale. And when it came to the conclusion, and the last words were still sounding in his ears, he suddenly rose and went to the window, as if attracted there by some sudden noise in the street below, instead of being affected by the story of the intended husband of his ward. Then he returned again to his seat, with the old quiet, careless expression on his features.

"Yes, yes, as you say, very romantic," he observed; "very strange; I don't quite see the force of the duty, but, then, I am a terrible cynic in such matters, and know little and care less of love and such follies. But I don't quite know how my ward would approve of being told that she owed your choice of her for a wife to accident of dates instead of actual preference."

"Don't be a fool or make me out one, Mordaunt," said Osborne, brusquely. "I might as well have picked up a village girl, or my own housemaid, if that were the reason of my proposing to Miss Mordaunt. No, it is simply this—she is an uncommonly pretty girl, and with a simplicity and yet a sort of pride in her that I never saw in any other girl of her age and as much admired as she is. And I don't think I am doing her any wrong by getting her out of your clutches, for it isn't quite the atmosphere that I should like a daughter of mine to be in, I can tell you."

Mordaunt laughed.

"Oh, yes, I understand all that," he said; "and I also understand that you think you have a better

chance of getting a young and lovely girl like Edith when you have got the guardian in the net, as well as the lady herself. And I'll keep my word, and give you the girl if you will be guided by me."

The man looked sharply round.

"Hallo, a hitch, is there? I see what you mean, Mordaunt, when you begin to talk in that way. She refused, I suppose?"

Mordaunt laughed.

"My good friend," he said, "what did you expect? With every deference to your excellent qualities, I ask you whether it is likely that a beautiful and admired girl of seventeen would jump at the offer of a man at least three times her age, and without a handle to his name or a blue riband in the button-hole to dazzle the eyes and hide the lines in the face? I tell you you shall have her, and that must be enough for you at present. But I have promised her that she shall not be worried or pressed for a reply for six months."

The man started from his chair.

"The devil you did!"

"The devil I did," coolly replied Mordaunt.

"And you expect me to wait, like a candidate for a nomination, till the time comes?"

"I do, simply because, if you do not, there is another whose time might come before yours; but, if you will trust to me, I will take care that his time shall never come."

"Who is it?"

"No one in Baden at present."

"Anyone that I know?"

"Perhaps. I really cannot decide on the extent of your acquaintance, Mr. Osborne, but whether you do or not makes no difference in this case. The young fellow in question is well born, good looking, and just a dash of the scamp, or rather more than a dash, which is a recommendation to many women. And the only thing against him is that he is poor and, just now, on his travels for the good of his health; and, therefore, Edith and I differ about his attractions, and, as I am master, you may understand which will have to give up the contest in the long run."

Osborne mused for some minutes.

"I don't like it," he said. "Give me a fair chance, and I'm much deceived if I don't make the girl willing. I will, at any rate, make her a good husband, and she shall tread upon velvet and satin if she likes, for the rest of her days."

"My good fellow, you don't know much about women, or you would comprehend that the girl is far too young and romantic, and knows too little about poverty to find any great attraction in your case. If you were twenty years older and an earl, she might, probably, run the risk with the prospect of being an attractive young widow in a few years, or if you were a young fellow, without a penny, she might jump out of window into your arms. But, as it is, you are far too young and hale for a chance of the first, and too old for the second. So just leave the matter for me to negotiate. I am in your power, even if I wished to play you false, which I do not, and if I see the least danger from any other quarter I will give you timely warning. But, meanwhile, you can be preparing for your wedding and your young bride's instalment at—where is it?—Briarmount?"

The wooer of Edith Mordaunt listened to the half-serious, half-sarcastic words with the cool air of a man who is too practical or too contemptuous to be irritated by the truths told him by the other. Then he rose quietly.

"Well, I'll think over it, I'll think over it; and, at any rate, I shall not take any steps in the affair at present. I have an appointment at one, and I see it only wants a quarter of that hour, so I will bid you good morning. You'll keep my secret and I'll keep yours, till we meet again."

"Certainly, certainly," said Mordaunt, apparently much relieved at this amicable conclusion of the interview; "and a very interesting tale that was of yours, Osborne. But, by the way, what kind of packet was that which was deposited with you for security by Mark Danvers?"

"What kind? why, an ordinary one. Did I not tell you that I did not open it, and that there were strict directions on the outside that it should not be opened for a certain period. I daresay it has been inspected long since. It is past the time specified."

"Ah, jewels, perhaps precious stones or some such valuables would be in it," remarked Mordaunt. "Was it hard or heavy?"

"Hard, yes; as to the weight, I think nothing very remarkable. But what on earth can it signify to you, Master Mordaunt, what it was like?"

"Oh, nothing particular; only a friend of mine lost some valuables about that time, and it looked uncommonly as if the packet might have been stolen and given as a valuable security to Mark Danvers. But it's done long since, and I had almost forgotten it, only that your story brought it in my head again. Well, I won't detain you. Good evening."

The door closed behind the guest.

And then Mordaunt threw himself back in his chair.

"Merciful heavens!" he exclaimed, albeit that such an ejaculation was sadly foreign to his thoughts or his nature. "Can it be. This alters all—all. And yet I don't know—I do not know. It is hard to see exactly how it will work, these tangled paths and complications. Still I like it—I like it on the whole. It gives scope to genius. And let me think—let me think. I don't want to play into my enemy's hands, and it all depends on the cards he holds whether this business turns out trumps or not. Confound those Danvers, they are always turning up in every direction. One would think that they were emperors or prime ministers instead of *parvenus* speculators. But I will find them yet—and them yet. The clue is in my grasp and I will work it, or my right hand has forgotten its cunning. Confound it. There's scripture again. A bad sign:

When the devil was sick, the devil a saint could be,
But the devil got well, and the devil a saint was he.

Won't do—won't do, and that these gentry will find to their cost. I never forget a foe, nor leave an injury unpunished. And they have themselves to thank for the fate they have provoked."

And Mr. Mordaunt fell into profound thought.

CHAPTER XX:

Rest, rest, oh, give me rest and peace,
The thought of life that ne'er shall cease
Has something in it like despair,
A weight that I'm too weak to bear;
Sweeter to this afflicted breast,
The thought of never-ending rest,
Sweeter the undisturbed and deep
Tranquillity of endless sleep.

Longfellow.

THE house of the Danvers had been left in peace and repose for the last few weeks. The season was over—quite over for the year. Only a few stray stragglers were in town.

Men and women detained either by business or by official or professional duties, or by sickness, or any other of the "inevitable causes" which prevent persons from obeying the calls of health or pleasure, as well as "her Majesty's councils." And London thus assumed the dismal and the desolate air of a deserted town, or one in which the plague reigns, at least, so far as the more fashionable districts were concerned.

As to the central and eastern parts of the metropolis, they remained in a happy state of uncertainty whether the season was May or September; whether the flag floated over Buckingham Palace or waved over the simpler and more domestic turrets of Balmoral. Now and then an enchain'd Cabinet minister, whose faithful wife insisted on sharing his privations and hardships, would attempt by a desperate effort to collect the scattered sheep of the aristocratic fold, and to strike out a spark from the cold, unbroken flint of the thick dullness around. But it was like a torch burning in water and as faint and dreary and mocking as such efforts are likely to be.

As we have said, the Danvers were among this small and scattered band. Mark Danvers' increasing indisposition was one of the ties that kept them in London. First, as there was over a great difficulty in moving the invalid from one house to another; and next because the doctor, who was in the habit of attending him, and was always a sort of necessary adjunct in the removal, whenever it took place, was at this time privately detained in London by the serious illness of one of the especial and noble patients who make the fortune of the fashionable physician.

And thus the family lingered on from week to week, in spite of heat, dust, and dullness; in spite of Oliver's daily increasing depression; in spite of Arthur's strange restlessness; in spite of Evelyn's uncomplaining languor and loss of spirits, which was scarcely noticed in the general cloud that hung over the household.

And Arthur would soon be gone far away. His commission had been given when the regiment was on the point of sailing for Canada. Oliver and Evelyn had mourned, and yet, perhaps, rejoiced over his approaching absence. The one because he would not involve one so young and joyous in grief and shame; the other because she hoped that she should soon be forgotten in another and far-distant land. Yet still his absence would make a blank and a dreariness in that doomed and melancholy house.

And the nurse? That singular Mrs. Fleming who was so insignificant and scarcely remarked an inmate of Mark Danvers' house. She was there still; and the same quiet, stealthy, ghost-like movements, the same calm, sad face, the same low tones distinguished her as the established nurse of the father as they had while the attendant of the son; she was never tiring, never wearied, never impatient. And, with the same strange ascendancy over her patient that she had obtained in Oliver's sick

room, she managed the more fretful and imbecile invalid. Her voice seemed to have a strange power over him. Her face would sometimes rivet his eyes for an hour together, all calm and unvarying as it appeared to ordinary persons.

He would follow her movements with his eyes, like a child watching its mother or nurse. He seemed calm when she was near him; impatient and restless when she was away, or even beyond reach of his look and voice.

Evelyn would sometimes kindly offer to relieve her constant, wearisome watch and ward. But her services were ever respectfully declined.

"No, no, Miss Rivers," she would say; "I am better now, better here than anywhere. It is the happiest place for me, because—because—"

"Because what?" asked the girl, kindly.

"Because—because—" and then she stopped for an instant. "Because," she added, more collectedly "it is a place of duty. Heaven grant that you, poor child, may never know the full value of such a consciousness. And you will not, you will not. You are one of the happy ones of the earth, who are born to know no other affection than what is good and blest. Pray to Him above, and bless Him that it is so."

She clasped the hand that the girl extended to her, and seemed as if she was about to press it to her lips. Then she suddenly dropped it, and hurried back to her post.

She was a singular woman, but by degrees the household began to forget her peculiarities in the comfort of knowing that the honoured master of the family was safe and well tended in her keeping. And there were so many causes for uneasiness and thought in the minds of the various members of the small circle that it could scarcely be otherwise. Perhaps Oliver was the centre of the disquiet. It was so unlike the strong man to fail, so unusual for him to betray gloom, or absence of mind, that it naturally spread to all around.

Evelyn watched him in secret.

While apparently withdrawing herself more and more from his society, unchecked by remorse from him, while more reserved and less apparently interested and sisterlike than before, she yet knew, as if by instinct, every turn of his face, every gesture, every tone of voice that betrayed involuntarily the gloom that settled over him. The girl's watchfulness was at once unsuspected by the object of it—and by herself. She knew not how Oliver engrossed her every thought, and occupied even the hours absent from him—save those that were sadly given up to thoughts of the absent Cecil, from whom no tidings had been received save one mysterious message, conveyed on a slip of paper, brought by a messenger, and with no date nor signature, which simply said:

"SAFE. Do not be anxious. All well."

Evelyn did not think of him, the dear erring brother; but far more constantly of him from whom she was so continually receiving care, kindness, and thoughtful service, and who was now so evidently in need of her care.

She would sometimes pass by his room, long after he had retired for the night, on pretence of some business or fatigue, and she would then constantly hear the dull rustle of papers—sometimes as if they were being torn, sometimes as if merely turned over and reviewed.

And always, after such a weary midnight inspection, she would observe that he came down on the following morning with all the symptoms that troubled her increased twofold; that wild look in the eyes; that gloomy, abstracted manner; that flushed face, which yet could scarcely conceal its wane.

All this she observed ever on these occasions with unusual clearness and force, and she trembled for the mystery that hung over the cousin whom of all men she had ever believed to be the most open and candid, and who would have been as soon guilty of reading an open letter or listening at a door, as of any dark manoeuvring, and managing, and concealment of the honest affairs that were transacted in his house.

Evelyn was certain that some strong necessity, some reasonable and tangible cause existed for all this. And that conviction only made her more painfully anxious, more deeply apprehensive of the result.

At last there was a break in the monotony of this fear and apprehension, though, as too often happens, Evelyn felt that it was but exchanging chronic for actual pain, or like reading a missing page of a book, which excites curiosity without gratifying it.

Oliver had just returned from some three or four hours' absence in the city. His face was pale, ghastly pale, as he first entered the house, though it recovered its habitual hue, or rather more than its habitual hue, when he found himself in Evelyn's presence.

The girl had just been receiving some late morning visitors in the drawing-room, and was just about to retire to her own quiet apartment, when the sound of Oliver's well-known step made her hesitate.

(To be continued.)

THE HAMPTON MYSTERY.

CHAPTER XXIX.

I feel my sinews slackened with the fright,
And a cold sweat thrills down o'er all my limbs,
As if I were dissolving into water. Dryden.

A DAY or two subsequent to her return from London, Giralda sat in the great bay-window of her pleasant chamber at Trevalyan Park, busy with a letter to her mother. It was to be sent to the assumed address given her by the Lady Beatrice, and the young girl was puzzling herself to chronicle her very meagre news in such a guarded manner that no one save her mother would understand it, should the letter fall into hostile hands. She had made no progress in her endeavour to soften Lord Trevalyan's heart towards the nephew his lordship believed dead, but her own standing at the Park had become assured, and the manner of the marquess towards her had become uniformly marked with the most respectful tenderness. Knitting her delicate brows together in a desperate little frown, Giralda set down these facts in a dainty handwriting like copperplate, and then studied alternately the roaring wood fire on the hearth, and the pleasant spring sunshine and waving trees without.

"Dear, dear!" she sighed, at last. "I have so little to tell! I'm afraid that these small details of my daily life will look so small to mamma! I have nothing to report about the great task I have undertaken—nothing whatever!"

She sighed again, and added another line to the unfinished letter.

She had scarcely paused again, the pen balancing between her white fingers, when the loud rumbling of wheels on the gravelled avenue below caught her attention, and she looked out, beholding a cart, laden with trunks and boxes, approaching the mansion.

"A visitor, I suppose," she thought. "Perhaps Lord Adlowe is come for a long stay!"

The idea was unpleasant, and, putting down her writing-case, Giralda crossed the floor several times, absorbed in anxious musings.

In the midst of them she was aroused by a knock on the door, and the entrance of her little maid, followed by a couple of stout servitors, each bearing a heavy trunk, which he deposited in the centre of the room, then beating a hasty retreat.

"If you please, miss," said the little maid, "here is a note from his lordship."

The surprised young mistress took the missive, and hastily perused it. It simply informed her that the accompanying trunks, with their contents, were a present from his lordship to his adopted niece.

"They are unstrapped, miss, and here are the keys," said the maid. "Shall I help you to unpack them, miss?"

Giralda assented, and the process of unpacking was hastily commenced.

The trunks were found to contain a young lady's complete wardrobe, including a riding-habit and hat. There were also in abundance, and unnamed, fine linen and cambrics, silks of various hues, and of the best quality, besides a box of gloves, and an elegant dressing-case, completely furnished, its fittings of silver-gilt.

Giralda spread out her new possessions with a pleasant sense of proprietorship, delighted with the fine fabrics and soft hues.

"How good his lordship is!" she thought, her cheeks burning. "And yet I am almost afraid to accept these things. I am an imposter here, and if he knew my parentage he would turn me out of his house! I wish he had not given them to me!"

At this juncture another knock was heard, and the servitor again appeared, this time bringing a small Russia-leather trunk. Giralda recognised it at once as her own property. The man set it down heavily and proceeded to unstrap it, saying, apologetically:

"This trunk was not ordered by my lord, and was not discovered until the boxes of house furniture were looked over. There is no key, miss. Shall we open it with a chisel?"

"No; I have a key to it," said Giralda. "You may go. And you too, Dolly," she added. "I will open this trunk myself."

The man withdrew, followed by the little maid. Giralda hastened to lock the door, and then prepared

to unpack the trunk with an interest the others had failed to elicit.

"From home!" she murmured, fitting one of the keys on the steel ring she had inadvertently brought from the Laurels in her pocket. "Mamma has been home, then, since she saw me! Have they sent me any messages—any letters?"

She lifted the lid eagerly. In the deep trays were boxes containing collars, cuffs, and similar elegancies, besides her own small writing-case, filled with writing materials, and her pretty mother-of-pearl work-box, with its dainty belongings. The upper part of the trunk was filled with under-clothing, the lower part with dresses, and at the bottom of all was a little package of letters, which Giralda pounced upon with a cry of joy.

There was a letter from the Lady Beatrice, and one from Giralda's father. These were read first. Both were tender, confidential missives, containing not a word of reproach, but breathing a world of faith and hope in the maiden's success, in the task she had undertaken. The count's letter gave a full and truthful account of the event that had disgraced Geoffrey Trevalyan, and expressed in conclusion the belief that it was through Giralda that the maligned heir of the marquess would finally be restored to his rights, and the respect and esteem of his kinsman.

The maiden's tears fell thickly on these letters, and she turned from them to those of Herbert, of Fay, and of good Meggy Fleck, all of whom had written at length. Her brothers, ignorant of her whereabouts and the reason for her absence, implored her to return, declaring that she had taken with her all the light and warmth of their home.

When Giralda had studied the letters until she knew their contents literally by heart, she restored them to their hiding-place, locked her trunk, removed the tears from her cheeks, and descended in search of the marquess, desiring to thank him for his presents.

She found his lordship on the terrace, leaning on his gold-headed staff, absorbed in the contemplation of a beautiful gray mare, which a man was leading back and forth before him.

The marquess' keen eyes caught sight of Giralda, as she stood, hesitating to approach him, and he beckoned to her, his grand old face glowing with a genial and kindly expression.

"This way, my child," he said, pleasantly. "You are just in time. What do you think of my new purchase? Isn't she a beauty?"

"A beauty indeed!" said Giralda, with enthusiasm, noting the large and soft brown eye and superb colour of the animal.

"She's as gentle as a swift. I've had my eye on her this year or two, but I had no one to buy her for," declared his lordship. "Her name is Zulime. She's partly Arab. She's a present to you from me, Giralda, and I should like to see you on her back. When will you try her?"

"Immediately!" exclaimed the young girl, with sparkling eyes. "How kind you are to me, uncle! I know how to ride. I used to ride a pony at home. I love a horse, and I shall enjoy the possession of this one more than I can express!"

"A horse is a necessity in this part of the country," said the marquess, cutting short her grateful thanks. "Run and put on your habit, my dear. I will send a man to attend you, while you take a canter over the hills!"

Giralda hastened to do his lordship's bidding. In a brief space she attired herself for her ride, and came down again flushed and pleased, her gray eyes glowing with a joyous light.

Zulime, saddled and bridled, awaited her at the porch; the marquess assisted her with a display of old time gallantry to mount, lamenting his inability to accompany her, and the next moment Giralda rode down the avenue with swiftness and grace, closely attended by a groom.

His lordship looked after her with a fond, proud smile.

"How beautiful and graceful she is!" he thought. "How well she sits her saddle! How strongly she resembles the Trevalyans! It is almost impossible that she should not be allied, even if remotely, to the Trevalyans. It seems incredible that such a marvellous resemblance can result from chance."

He gazed after the young horsewoman until she had passed outside the lodge gates, and then was about to re-enter the dwelling, when the gates opened again to give admittance to a lumbering old fly.

"Visitors, eh?" soliloquised the marquess. "It must be Adlowe. And that is his man Haskins on the box."

This conclusion was soon verified. The fly drove up to the porch, and Lord Adlowe alighted, an

uneasy and discontented expression on his countenance, as he marked the great improvement in the place and of his uncle since his recent visit.

The cause of his lordship's unexpected return to the Park was simple. He had called upon the Lady Beatrice at Hampton House, intending to force from her ladyship a confession of her identity with the so-called Countess of Arevalo, but had found that she was in the midst of one of her mysterious seclusions, or absences. He had called a second time with no better effect, and finally, becoming impatient and wrathful, had determined on a visit to Trevalyan Park, hoping to extract information in some way from Giralda.

Lord Trevalyan received him coldly, and with a cynical smile.

"Back again so soon, Adlowe?" he exclaimed, bestowing a keen glance on his nephew. "To what do I owe this—ahem!—this pleasure?"

"I've only come for a day or two, uncle," replied Adlowe, with assumed carelessness, as the two entered the large, warm hall. "The truth is, I do not like to leave you so entirely to strangers. Besides, as your heir," he added, "it is not right for me to abandon you to become the prey of designing people in your old age!"

The marquess knitted his brows together in a black frown, and an ominous look gleamed in his black eyes. With an effort, however, he controlled his rising passions, and maintained a significant silence.

"How you have changed the old place," observed Adlowe, as they sauntered into the drawing-room. "The house is all open—the furniture uncovered—and, as I live, there are new servants."

"Yes," said Lord Trevalyan, composedly, "and that is not all. The house is to be newly furnished throughout. The boxes containing some of the new furniture arrived this morning. I have bought new horses for riding and for carriage use. The conservatories, greenhouses, and graperies are to be put into immediate repair. I have lost several years, during which I lived like a hermit. I am only seventy-five now, with a constitution which even you might envy. Ours is a long-lived race, Adlowe, and I am good for twenty years yet. Don't you think so?"

He certainly looked so, as he drew up his colossal figure to its utmost height, his eyes sparkling maliciously, his rugged face ruddy and fresh, his whole being instinct with power and strength.

A bitter curse arose to the lips of the scheming nephew, and a sullen rage was visible in every feature.

"Where is your young adventuress?" he asked, with an uncontrollable sneer. "You haven't tired of her already, and sent her away?"

The old lord's eyes blazed.

"Another such allusion to Miss Arevalo," he said, his tones hoarse with anger, "and my doors shall be closed against you while I live! Take care, Adlowe. I am not a patient man. He who insults my ward insults me."

Adlowe shrank before the storm he had raised, and stammered an apology. It was not his purpose to quarrel with his uncle.

"To put the question properly," he said, deprecatingly, "is Miss Arevalo at the Park?"

"She is at present out riding," responded the marquess, with haughty coldness. "If her innocent beauty has attracted you to the Park, Adlowe, you need not stay here. Her acquaintance is not for you. Even had not the countess, her mother, warned me to keep Giralda from your sight, I should not have allowed you to make her acquaintance."

A strange light leaped to Adlowe's eyes.

"Her mother warned you to keep the girl out of my sight, eh?" he exclaimed. "Strange! No, it is not strange. I think, uncle," he added, "I'll go up to my room and brush off this dust, and make myself presentable. I suppose I shall see Miss Arevalo in your presence?"

Scarcely waiting for a reply, he withdrew, sauntering upstairs towards the apartment he had occupied on the occasion of his previous visit.

Passing along the wide hall, he observed the door of Giralda's room ajar.

He moved towards it and peered in.

It had been Geoffrey Trevalyan's room, and had been shut up closely for years. Strange memories swept over Adlowe's dark soul as he threw an eager glance around the long-disused room, noticing the picture of his banished cousin on the wall, the crackling, blazing fire on the hearth, and the wealth of costly clothing scattered over the furniture and bed.

"There is no fool like an old fool," he muttered,

his brow darkening. "He is spending money lavishly on this stranger, while I am almost desperate for want of it. Silks, satins, laces, and shawls! One would think this the wardrobe of a princess. The old dotard! He ought to be put into an insane asylum. Ah! there's a little writing-desk on the table in the bay-window. My lady has been writing—to her mother, of course! I wonder if the letter has been posted."

He assured himself that no one was in the room, and then stole in softly, approaching the little desk. To his great joy it was not locked.

He lifted the lid eagerly, and looked into the desk. There before him lay Giralda's unfinished letter—the arrival of the trunks, the home letters, and the marquis' latest gift, having caused the maiden to forget it.

With many furtive glances at the window and door, Geoffrey Trevalyan's enemy perused the letter—his face growing blacker with every line.

It was a simple letter, with an account of Giralda's daily life, and of the tender kindness which the marquis continually displayed towards her. It contained several guarded allusions to the hidden home, and there was more than one expression of regret that the writer had done so little towards the accomplishment of her great work.

"Her great work!" mused the scheming enemy of the Lady Beatrice and Geoffrey Trevalyan. "A work which she comes to Trevalyan Park to execute! What can it be?"

He lifted his gaze thoughtfully to the picture of his wronged and banished cousin. The glance was enough. The truth came to his soul like an electric shock.

"Her great work is to clear the name of Geoffrey Trevalyan!" he exclaimed aloud. "I see it at last. Geoffrey is alive! See, here she speaks in her letter of 'clearing poor papa's name!' I had overlooked that sentence. Geoffrey Trevalyan, my old rival and unconscious enemy, is alive, in England, the husband of the Lady Beatrice Hampton, the father of her child, or children."

He continued to look at the portrait with starting eyes and livid complexion. His brain reeled, and for a minute his plotting brain became the theatre of a wild chaos. He sank down in Giralda's white-covered easy-chair, pallid and trembling.

"This, then," he said, in a hollow whisper, "explains the mysterious absences of the Lady Beatrice from her home. Geoffrey Trevalyan has been all these years in England, while we believed him dead. He has been here, secluded somewhere under a false name, happy in Beatrice Hampton's love, and serenely waiting for Lord Trevalyan's death. Ten thousand curses! How she must have laughed in her sleeve at my proposals of marriage. How she must have despised me in her heart for a weak, blind idiot."

He gnashed his teeth in his rage.

"No doubt she has reported my love-making to Geoffrey Trevalyan," he continued, still more hollowly. "No doubt they have laughed together over my folly in addressing a married woman, for such my Lady Beatrice is! My heart told me from the first that this young girl had a right to Geoffrey's eyes—that she was his child! The scene at the theatre ought to have told me all that I have learned from this letter. This Giralda is Geoffrey's daughter, and consequently my uncle's heiress. The title—Oh, where are my wits?" and a painful cry escaped his white lips. "Geoffrey Trevalyan himself will inherit title and estates at Trevalyan's death! He has taken from me the woman I love! He won from me in boyhood my uncle's heart! He will come between me and the title and estates for which I have perilled my soul! And I—"

He gave utterance to a cry strangely resembling that of a wild beast in deadly suffering.

All the facts of his position crowded on his soul with awful force. Great beads of perspiration stood out on his corrugated brows, and a wild look came to his small serpent-like eyes. It seemed as though a temporary madness had seized him. Flinging down the letter whose contents he had so treacherously learned, he dashed out of the room, hurrying madly to his own chamber.

CHAPTER XXX.

Into my heart a silent look
Flash'd from thy careless eyes,
And what before was shadow, took
The light of summer skies.
The first born love was in that look:
The Venus rose from out the deep
Of those inspiring eyes.

Bulwer.

MEANWHILE, unconscious of the sinister arrival at the Park and the fateful discovery of her unfinished letter by Lord Adlowe, Giralda cantered along the

mountain road to the eastward, her heart light, her pulses bounding, and her whole soul in a happy glow.

The morning was delightful for exercise, the breeze being light and bracing, and there being a crisp coolness to the atmosphere which was as exhilarating as a draught of rare old wine. The sun sent out now and then a grand burst of sunshine, as the light gray clouds parted, irradiating the wild mountain scenery with a peculiar glory.

"Ah! this is life!" thought Giralda her slight figure swaying gracefully with every easy motion of Zulime, her eyes sparkling, her chest heaving. "I suppose papa has been over this road a thousand times! Perhaps he cherishes in his heart memories of every hill and dale, every rock and stream, I look on this morning!"

The thought gave a double charm to her ride. She surveyed the scene around her eagerly.

She was on a rough and hilly road, but little better than a path, with rude ascents and descents, bordered in places by stone-hedged fields, and in other places by open commons, through whose stone-littered surface there was struggling into life furze and wild gorse in profusion. On every side, in the distance, rose the tall, rude Welsh hills, on one of which Trevalyan Park was situated. Between these hills were dark, secluded valleys, deep ravines, and narrow gorges, many of which crossed the road and were spanned by rude wooden or stone bridges. There were several mountain torrents too, which descended from the hills, crossed the road, and cut their way through the hard rock to the sea some nine miles distant.

All these wild features possessed a strange charm for Giralda. For a long distance the fields and the commons, the shepherds' huts and the strong farm-houses, the green valleys and the stony hills, all belonged to the Trevalyan estate, of which her father—the wronged Geoffrey Trevalyan—was the rightful heir. Giralda exulted in the pleasant thought.

After a time, a feeling of loneliness came over her. The vast solitude oppressed her. She drew rein, and looked back for her servitor.

He was following her at a little distance, but came up at once at her gesture. He was an old man, staid and solemn of aspect, looking like one who dwells chiefly in the past. He had an honest face, and seemed still to possess a fair share of vigour.

"I do not remember having seen you until this morning," observed the young lady, pleasantly. "Are you one of the new servants?"

"Yes, miss, and one of the oldest as well," replied the old man, brightening up, and pulling at his forelock. "My name is Thomas. I served at the Park, man and boy, miss, until Master Geoffrey went away, and then I left my lord, and took to farming. I've been living with my married daughter the last five years, but my lord sent for me the other day, so I came back."

"You knew Mr. Geoffrey, then?" asked Giralda, flushing.

"Knew him, miss? He was the apple of my eye! I taught him how to ride. Many's the time we've rode together over this very road to the sea! Many's the time we've hunted together! He was the best horseman, the best shot, the gayest, the brightest, and the handsomest lad that was ever seen! Your eyes, miss, are the very moral of his'n!" and the old servitor stared at her in simple wonder. "He died in a furrin country, poor boy! I shall never get over his death!"

"How deeply he attached everybody to him!" said Giralda, with a faint sigh. "None of the servants believed him guilty of that attempt to murder his uncle, notwithstanding the evidence against him. But the marquis thinks him guilty."

"The marquis reasons it out," said the servitor, simply, "but we servants loved him too much to believe ill of Master Geoffrey, or to hearken to reason in the matter. Besides, Lord Adlowe has always been bitter against his cousin, and he set the marquis up to hate him worse!"

These words rang in the maiden's ears as she resumed her canter, but the brightness of the morning, and the pleasant exercise soon banished all disagreeable thoughts from her mind.

As she gradually neared the sea, to which she proposed to extend her ride, the breeze became stronger, more bracing, with a pleasant flavour of saltiness.

At length Giralda halted upon the brow of a hill higher than the rest, and feasted her eyes for the first time upon the blue, white-crested waves of the ocean. A tall lighthouse tower was visible upon the right, and white sails glimmered against the far-off dusky blue. A little village was gathered on the

summit of the coast cliffs, under the shelter of a bluff which rose boldly on its right.

When Giralda had drunk in to the full the wild beauty of the restless, changing sea, she turned her gaze upon the bluff, which was crowned with a large and stately dwelling, with towers and turrets, wide windows that glittered in the sunshine like gigantic jewels, and hoary walls, which, like hoary hairs, attested age.

"That is like one of the old castles of which I have read," murmured Giralda. "It must be delightful to live on the summit of that high bluff, and hear the eternal murmur of the waves against its base. Is it a very old place, Thomas?"

"About a hundred years old, miss," replied the servitor. "Maybe more. That is the Eagle's Eyrie, one of the homes of the lords of Grosvenor. They are a proud race, miss. One of the Lord Grosvenors married a Welsh beauty, and this place belonged to her. It has been enlarged and altered in every generation. When you get up to it it's a grand place, with beautiful gardens, a pretty lake, and all the fine things the nobility like to have."

"One of their homes?" repeated Giralda. "Have they more than one?"

"Yes, miss. The Grosvenors are very wealthy. They have all married heiresses, who have brought their estates into the family. They visit this place every summer; leastways, they did, miss, till the old lord died last autumn, and ever since the young lord has shut himself up at the Eyrie."

"Where are his relatives?" asked Giralda.

"Dead. He is alone in the world, miss. He's a fine young gentleman. I saw him the other day over at Trevalyan village. He rides all over the country, and is a splendid horseman. He is a good shot; and as to boating, they do say he is out in all weathers, when none of the fishermen durst venture. He's a perfect dare-devil, miss, saving your presence."

"We are about midway between Trevalyan Park and the sea," said Giralda looking back. "How plainly the Park is seen from this place!"

She gazed a few moments in silence, and then, gave Zulime her head, proceeding easily down the hill on whose crest she had halted.

At the foot of the hill was a rugged ravine, through which a swollen stream roared sullenly, and beyond the ravine rose another hill somewhat abruptly. The stream was spanned by a rude, old wooden bridge, against which the risen waters fretted, causing it to shiver convulsively.

"The bridge doesn't look safe," thought Giralda hesitating. "Yet no doubt people cross it every day. I will venture."

She bestowed a sharp glance upon the wooden abutments of the bridge, and noted that a tall tree on the nearest bank had been partially uprooted by the rushing waters, and had bowed itself half across the stream, its trunk resting against the lower side of the bridge.

"I'm afraid that the weight of those heavy limbs is too much for these weakened supports," said the young girl. "Yet, by the tracks on the bank here, someone has crossed this morning. Wait till I am across, Thomas, and then follow."

She urged Zulime sharply, and the mare, frightened yet obedient, struck forward with a bound.

There was a sound of ringing hoofs on the yielding timbers; then came a terrific crash, a sullen roar, a splash, and the entire bridge, crumbling into a shapeless ruin, whirled away upon the waters.

The bowed tree bent lower, its branches encompassing Giralda.

With a sudden and strange instinct, her reason in a whirl, Giralda reached upward and caught the nearest of these branches and clung to them, while her steed was borne from under her by the rushing stream.

In a moment more the maiden had swung herself into a secure perch, and sat, pale and trembling, above the surge and the roar, scarcely conscious of her safety. The inclined trunk of the tree lowered slowly.

On the bank her attendant danced about in a panic of terror. The peerless mare was already battling with the current, in an endeavour to gain the bank, the broken timbers hurling against her like so many weapons of destruction at every step.

"What am I to do, miss?" cried Thomas in an agony. "The tree cannot bear another weight, and I am old and cannot swim. Oh, what shall I do?" and he wrung his hands with frenzy.

"Compose yourself, Thomas," said the young girl whose self-possession had returned to her, and whose mind was now clear. "First see if the roots are giving way entirely!"

Thomas made the desired investigation.

"They are giving way entirely," he answered, with a burst of sobs. "Hear 'em snap! Your weight is finishing what the water begun! You'll be adrift in five minutes!"

Giralda leaned forward, looking for herself.

"You are right, Thomas," she said, with a calmness that soothed his terrors in spite of himself. "I should but precipitate the event if I were to try to creep along the slippery branches to the shore. The bridge is gone completely. It is too far to attempt to leap to either bank. You must go for help!"

"For help! Why, miss, before I could get to the Park, you would be drowned!"

"Is there no house in the neighbourhood? I fancy I can see a chimney up the ravine!"

"I will look," said Thomas. "There's a man lives in the neighbourhood—Ah!"

He paused abruptly, staring at the opposite hill, upon whose summit for one brief instant was outlined the figures of a horse and rider.

Giralda observed them at the same instant.

They vanished immediately, the horse leaping up the ravine.

"You are safe, now, miss!" cried Thomas. "That was young Lord Grosvenor. If anybody can save you, he can!"

"I don't see how he is to do it," said Giralda. "If he does not come soon, I shall be adrift. In that case, there is little chance of my gaining the shore. See! Zulime has reached the bank! Help her up, Thomas. How she quivers in every nerve!"

While her attendant was endeavouring to assist the mare to a foothold on the bank, Giralda looked her danger fairly in the face.

She felt the tree sinking steadily under her weight. A constant snapping came from the small portion of the roots which still adhered to the bank, showing that they would soon give way. There was no chance that she would ever reach the shore unaided. She believed that she would not live long in these cold and fierce waters.

Her thoughts turned to her hidden home—to her parents, her brothers—to the work to which she had vowed herself, and which she must leave unfinished—to Heaven.

"Zulime is landed!" cried Thomas, at this juncture. "She isn't hurt, beyond a few scratches. But oh, miss, the tree is giving way! You will be drowned!"

Giralda opened her lips to comfort the terror-stricken old man, but she did not speak.

Her despairing eyes had caught sight of a boat a few rods above, as it shot out into the stream.

In a moment hope had reasserted itself.

"Hold fast there!" called out the boatman, in a fresh young voice. "Cling to the tree when it breaks loose. Have no fears. I'll be alongside in a minute."

The boat advanced swiftly, the long oars propelling it forward like an arrow. Giralda had only time to note the powerful sweep of the boatman's arms, and to mark his attitude of determination, when, with a whirr and a crash, the tree broke loose and went whirling on the stream—fortunately, however, with Giralda uppermost.

Thomas sent up a wailing cry.

The boatman said not a word. His keen eyes swept the stream. He sent his boat forward with a velocity like lightning, the current helping him.

In a moment more he had gained the tree, which was sinking every instant deeper into the water, and had checked his speed by catching hold of one of the branches. The boat laid beside Giralda.

"Throw yourself into it," he said, briefly. "I will catch you."

Giralda obeyed her rescuer's injunction, falling into his outstretched arms.

The boat, thus released from the tree, shot forward, beyond all danger of entanglement with the trailing branches.

The gallant rescuer seized his oars and resumed his work, while Giralda sat down in the bottom of the boat opposite to him.

"It won't be easy to land just here," he said, with a smile of encouragement. "The banks are lower a little way down. I'll land you there."

He bent every energy to his task, and the boat obeyed his will as if sentient.

Unheeding the rush and roar all round her, Giralda looked at her rescuer through grateful tears.

He was young, not over three and twenty, and as handsome as a young Apollo. She could see that he was tall and straight, and lithe of figure as a willow. His chest was broad, his arms sinewy, his white hands as strong and firm in their grasp as those of the stoutest labourer. Yet he had that patrician aspect supposed to be peculiar to those born to wealth

and honours, used to command, and familiar with the best culture which high-breeding can give.

Giralda thought, with a strange flutter at her heart, that she had never seen a face of such perfect manly beauty. His eyes were of hazel darkness, penetrating and earnest in their expression, and set under broad square brows on which sat plainly enthroned a superior intellect. His hair was of a tawny gold colour, as also was the thick graceful moustache that shaded his upper lip. He had a noble face, grave and earnest, and expressive of mental and moral strength.

To Giralda's young imagination he became at once a hero.

He did not look at her again, his boat demanding his entire attention, until the keel grated upon the hard bank several rods below the spot where old Thomas was waiting. He then sprang out drew the boat to a more secure position, and assisted her to the solid ground.

"Safe!" murmured Giralda, in a voice that faltered despite her efforts to retain her calmness. "Safe on the secure shore! I thank you, my lord, for giving me back the life I had thought so nearly ended."

She looked up at him with brimming eyes.

It was strange, perhaps, but the young boatman experienced, as he encountered that glance, a singular flutter at his heart, similar to that the maiden had felt shortly before.

He looked at her earnestly, beholding what seemed to him a bewildering and angelic vision, made up of glowing violet eyes, wet with grateful tears, scarlet parted lips, pale cheeks, a wide low forehead framed around with dusky rings clustering close about a classic head, and a slender figure with the grace of a gazelle.

"My coming was opportune!" he acknowledged, with a shuddering glance back at the roaring stream, as he thought of what might have been had he not been near. "Do you live in this vicinity?"

"At Trevalyan Park. I am Miss Arevalo, Lord Trevalyan's ward and adopted niece," explained the young girl, blushing shyly under the unconsciously admiring gaze of her rescuer.

"And I am Paul Grosvenor, of the Eagle's Eyrie," said the young man, smiling. "So we are fairly introduced, if not according to the usual forms. I trust, Miss Arevalo, that this little adventure is but the prelude to a long friendship. I am acquainted with Lord Trevalyan, who was my father's old friend, and I shall give myself the pleasure of a speedy visit to his lordship, whom I have not seen of late."

As Giralda blushing assured him that he would be welcome at the Park, the young Lord Grosvenor was wondering within himself how it had come to pass that such a lovely young creature as this should be an inmate of Trevalyan Park, and pitying her for being doomed to the companionship of one whom he believed, like others, to be ill-natured and miserly.

The young girl divined his thoughts.

"Lord Trevalyan is my dear friend," she said, with grave earnestness. "He has a noble nature, which sorrow and disappointments have embittered, but not changed. You will like him when you know him better."

"I know I shall," declared the young man, ardently, entirely convinced that his long-standing opinion of the marquis had been wrong—so potent with him were Giralda's words already! "My father was an old man, and Lord Trevalyan's classmate. My father knew him well, and often said the marquis had a noble, though strange nature. I had not heard of your presence at the Park. Ah, yes; I did hear the other day at Trevalyan village that Lord Trevalyan's niece was living with him. How could I have forgotten it?"

Giralda blushed again, his question seeming to mean so much. She shook off the few drops of water that clung to her habit, settled her hat jauntily on her head, and looked towards Thomas, whose excitement was finding vent in a vigorous polishing of both Zulime and her saddle.

"I intended to go on to the sea," she said, "but the loss of the bridge settles that project."

She moved slowly towards Zulime, Lord Grosvenor keeping at her side.

"There is a ford above here," said the young man, eagerly. "I know it well. You have lost but little time by your adventure. Why not continue your ride as you originally intended, Miss Arevalo?"

Giralda hesitated but for a moment.

"I will finish my excursion some other day," she said, with gentle courtesy. "My adventure has shaken my nerves a little, I think, and I had better return home."

The young man assisted her to mount, not venturing to combat her decision.

"You will permit me to call to-morrow to inquire after your health, Miss Arevalo?" he asked, raising his hat. "Good morning."

He stood, his hat in his hand, until Giralda, followed by her attendant, had disappeared over the brow of the hill, on their journey home.

His face haunted the maiden's thoughts as she cantered over the hills and dales towards the Park. She could not explain even to herself why his glances had had such power to call the blushes to her cheeks, or why she could not banish him from her mind.

Notwithstanding her abstraction, she had a smile ready for the lodge-keeper, there being one installed now, and in return for her civility, she learned that Lord Adlowe had arrived at the Park.

The information greatly damped her spirits.

"I should like to go up quietly to my room unseen by him," she thought, as she proceeded slowly up the avenue. "My dress is wrinkled and dragged. He will be sure to see what I do not care to have him know, that I have had an adventure!"

She came to a halt abruptly, and beckoned Thomas to approach.

"Take Zulime round to the stables," she said, quietly, "and say nothing about the broken bridge. I will walk to the house."

She slipped from her seat, giving her bridle to the servitor. He hurried the horses by the nearest route to the stables, while Giralda proceeded by a secluded by-path to a side porch.

She had not taken a dozen steps before she came full upon an embowered little summer-house, almost buried under a profusion of vines, and at the same moment she heard voices in consultation.

They were the voices of Lord Adlowe and the so-called Haskins, his valet.

Giralda essayed to pass on, but at that moment a sentence was uttered by Lord Adlowe that held her transfixed, an unintentional listener!

(To be continued.)

FACETIÆ.

A POPULAR speaker has got up a lecture on "Getting Ahead." A head is a good thing to get—if there are any brains in it.

ALTHOUGH lawyers are a class of men whose honesty of purpose is universally suspected, we must say that we never knew one who objected to doing a good deed.

A VERY pompous Englishman, who has a good deal of money, lately said an ex-ambassador, "H—, I want a good investment. What do you do with your money?" "Why," replied his excellency, "I bought an umbrella with the last I had."

HOW HE LOST A CUSTOMER.

A few days since a well-dressed lady entered the shop of a London tradesman, who, among other proprietary articles, is the inventor of a celebrated hair tonic.

As she entered, the shopkeeper was behind the counter, a matter rather rare for him, and with his hat on his head. He personally waited on her, asking, with his best smile: "What can I show you, ma'am?"

"Your hair tonic," "Here it is, ma'am," producing a bottle of the article.

"This is what makes hair grow, does it?"

"Yes, ma'am; you'll find a little pamphlet inside the wrapper with many certificates from people who have been bald."

"Humph. What's the price?"

"Six shillings a bottle, ma'am—six bottles for thirty shillings."

"You're certain it'll make hair grow?" "It never fails unless the hair is destroyed by disease."

"Well, I've lost a little of my hair; I will try it."

Proprietor said he had no doubt the tonic would accomplish the result, and the lady ordered a half-dozen to be sent to her house. Proprietor took the address. As the lady turned to leave the shop proprietor removed his hat, showing a head whose crown was innocent of covering.

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed the lady, transfixed, looking at him in blank surprise.

"What is it, ma'am?"

"Why, if you ain't bald yourself!"

Proprietor was about to rejoin, but the lady continued:

"I don't want your hair tonic now."

Proprietor attempted to explain, but the lady wouldn't listen. She couldn't be made to believe that

a man could make a preparation to restore other people's hair and remain bald himself.

The moral is, when bald people sell hair tonic they should keep their hats on.

A NEW THOROUGHFARE.—We understand that it is in view to petition the Board of Works to alter the name of Holywell Street, and call it Boucicault's Buildings. Of course London improvements must ere long compel the abolition of that thoroughfare altogether; but possibly that will be of the less consequence as the notoriety of the name will have expired by that time.

INGENIOUS PROBLEM.

Podgers: "The bells is out, and yet the bell remains."

Sniffles: "Ha! ha!—I see—good—and that's the reason, I suppose, why we hear now-a-days of so many wedding-rings!"

Podgers: "Yes, it's all owing to the crinoline."

REV. DR. MACLEOD and **Dr. Dobson** were in the West Highlands together on a tour, before leaving for India. While crossing a loch in a boat in company with a number of other passengers, a storm came on. One of the passengers was heard to say "that the two ministers should begin an' pray or we'll a' be drowned." "Na, na," said the boatman, "the little ane can pray if he likes, but the big ane maun tak' an oar."

ANTI-NICOTINE.

Railroad Official: "You had better not smoke, sir."

Traveler: "That's what my friends say."

Official: "But you must not smoke, sir."

Traveler: "That's what the doctor tells me."

Official (indignantly): "But you shan't smoke, sir!"

Traveler: "Ah! that's what my wife says."

SMART.—A schoolmaster the other day was explaining to his class the difference between the Latin pronouns *iste* and *ille*. "*Ille* means that yonder, *iste* this near," said the pedagogue. The turning to the sharp boy of the class, he said, as he pointed to a distant range, "What is that?" "Well," said the boy, "I should call them *misty*, but I suppose they are *illy*."

A STANDING CROP.—Hamlet's hair on end when he saw his father's ghost.—*Will o' the Wisp.*

"HEAD"IFYING FOR TOMPKINS.

Tompkins (who hasn't yet quite attained the Oxford style: "Dunno how it is, can't get on at all, my—a—sculls too evvy, I think."

Carry: "Heavy! By the way you're rowing I should think a great deal more likely your skull is too light."—*Will o' the Wisp.*

A SLIGHT OVERSIGHT.

A statement was made in the papers the other day, that "places had just been made for two new piers." Considering that there are one or two piers in the Cabinet already, who could well be spared, this was rather extraordinary; but *Judy* was glad to find, when she put on her spectacles, that the places to be found are at Hungerford and Waterloo Bridge.—*Judy.*

AN UNLIMITED MAIL.—The sort of train one never misses on any railway—the black mail levied by the porters and other officials.—*Judy.*

FROM THE SHIRES.

The thorough John Bull sturdiness of character, inseparable from the well-to-do British farmer, is manifest in the following clipping from the *Gloucester Journal*:

"I hereby caution all persons not to trespass on any land rented by me, in pursuit of game or otherwise, as I will not be trespassed upon. . . . Upton St. Leonard's, August, 1869."

How long will it be before the law of copyright is so far amended as to enable the pen to state as emphatically as the plough—"I will not be trespassed upon"?—*Fun.*

MORBID.

Old Gentleman: "Where doth Aunt Jenny think her's goin' then?"

Old Lady: "Why, I be goin' so far as the church, there's a weddin' they tell me; and since the hangin' in public have a-bin done away wi', marry-in's a'most the only amusement o' the sort left!"—*Fun.*

WELL-NAMED.—"Mr. Henley on the late Session." Remembering that the House of Commons used to sit till two and three o'clock in the morning, a more suitable epithet could hardly have been devised for the Parliament of 1869. No wonder the fine old member for Oxfordshire talked at the Bicester dinner about sleep in the House.—*Punch.*

IN THE LONG VACATION.—The newspapers have been speaking lately about the possibility of some great legal changes taking place, one of which might send an eminent Justice of the Common Pleas to the

Court of Probate and Divorce. Should this transfer ever take place, it will be universally acknowledged that a more appropriate selection for the Court of Probate could not possibly be made than—*Willes.*—*Punch.*

BY OUR OWN SIR ORACLE.—Shut out the subject of the weather, and you destroy half the world's conversation.—*Punch.*

BRIGANDAGE NEAR ROME.—A duke and his daughter were robbed by brigands the other day near the Chigi Park. This, says the report, "causes much trouble and apprehension to those who are ruralising at Albano." If the "apprehension" could only be applied to the brigands, the cause of the neighbourhood's trouble would be soon removed.—*Punch.*

THE COTTAGE UNDER THE HILL.

No lordly elm trees are swaying there;
But the rustic oak and the cedar fair,
That grow by the winding rill.
Their tall heads wave on the summer air,
O'er the cottage under the hill!

The robin loves at the twilight hour,
Ere he flitteth away to his roosting bower,
His evening song to trill;
And the wild bee sings from the violet flower
By the cottage under the hill!

The wild bee hangs from the moss roof low,
And always with motion sweet and slow,
As over the grass so still
The western zephyrs softly blow,
By the cottage under the hill!

No gold and silver are stored within,
But a crowned monarch would sigh to win
The peace so holy, still,
That bodeth far from the court of sin,
In the cottage under the hill!

W. C.

GEMS.

It is only those that have done nothing who fancy they can do everything.

You cannot do two things well at once; you cannot carry two melons under one arm.

Be always at leisure to do good. Never make business an excuse for declining offices of humanity.

We hope to grow old, and yet we fear old age; that is, we are willing to live, and afraid to die.

WHEN one man has a little prejudice against another, suspicion is very busy in coining resemblances.

The man who gives his children a habit of industry, provides for them better than by giving them a stock of money.

THERE is no folly equal to that of throwing away friendship in a world where friendship is so rare.

WHEN men fall, they love company; but when they rise, they love to stand alone, and see others prostrate.

STATISTICS.

MILITARY STATISTICS.—From returns lately issued it appears that of over 10,000 men enlisted 86 are over 6ft. in height, 116 are between 5ft. 11in. and 6ft. The most prevailing height is between 5ft. 5in. and 5ft. 6in., in which standard there are 2,845. Only 35 recruits in the 10,000 weigh upwards of 170lb., while 3,019 weigh between 120lb. and 130lb. Of every 1,000 enlisted, 222 could neither read nor write, 107 could read only, and 671 could both read and write. The above data are based on returns for the year 1867.

STATISTICS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH, 1869.—There are 23,441,200 acres comprised in the colony. The extent of land in the possession of freeholders amounted to 2,370,079 acres, being an increase of 92,138 acres for the year. The area enclosed increased 929,196 acres. 533,035 acres were sown with wheat, from which 5,173,970 bushels were reaped, or an average of 9½ bushels per acre. Barley, 21,244 acres, yield 311,142 bushels; oats, 4,210 acres, yield 59,213 bushels. Hay there was a large increase in, the average, say from 97,432 acres in 1867-8 to 106,644 acres in 1868-9, producing 118,167 tons. Potatoes, a decrease from 2,701 acres and 6,538 tons to 2,684 acres and 6,335 tons.

EXPENSES OF FORTIFICATIONS.—There has been a return just issued showing that up to the 1st April last 5,412,949l. has been expended on fortifications, of which 1,092,867l. is recorded on account of lands, and 4,320,582l. on account of works. The money was spent on the different stations as follows: Ports-

mouth, 2,154,363l. 5s. 4d.; Plymouth, 1,321,649l. 10s.; Pembroke, 272,746l. 19s. 4d.; Portland, 330,126l. 1s. 6d.; Gravesend, 172,024l. 6s. 3d.; Chatham, 221,428l. 17s. 9d.; Sheerness, 300,409l. 3s. 3d.; Dover, 283,065l. 10s. 9d.; Cork, 76,032l. 7s. 4d.; providing and fixing iron shields, 2,293l. 10s. 10d.; incidental expenses, works, 154,125l. 2s. 1d.; experiments, 14,654l. 6s. 6d.; surveys, 30,812l. 4s.; clearance works, 46,775l. 10s. 7d.; legal and other incidental expenses, 32,174l. 4s. 7d.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

AN ANTIDOTE TO NICOTINE.—A bit of news which will be welcome to hygienists and smokers. M. Armand, a French *savant*, has stated to the Academy of Sciences that he has discovered a sure antidote to nicotine. Success has thus crowned the efforts which he has been making for the last few years. The antidote is nothing else than common watercress. It destroys the poisonous effects of nicotine, and yet does not alter the aroma of tobacco. A solution of watercress may, therefore, be employed for steeping the leaves of tobacco, and would thus effectually divest them of their noxious properties; moreover, a draught of the same will act as a sure antidote to nicotine.

TREATMENT OF SCARLET FEVER.—Dr. Charles T. Thompson reports in the *Lancet* his manner of treatment in scarlet fever as follows: The patient is immersed in a warm bath in the early stage of the disease, and this is repeated frequently, or as often as the strength of the patient will allow. The first effect is to produce a soothing and refreshing feeling in the patient, to be followed soon by such an eruption on the surface, of so vivid a colour, and in such amount as would astonish those who have never witnessed it. Thus one of the greatest dangers of this fearful disease—the suppression of the eruption—is escaped. The appetite generally returns after the first or second bath, and the strength of the patient is kept up by nutritious food. The bath prevents the dissemination of the disease, by removing the excreta from the skin as soon as it is deposited. This treatment promotes cuticular desquamation. The body should be gently dried by soft linen cloths after the bath. By this procedure the various secretions are deprived of their noxious properties, and the irritation of internal organs is quickly relieved, thus dissipating infection. Another benefit is that a very serious case is soon reduced to a mild one, and the patient recovers in less than half the usual time. Since Dr. Thompson has pursued this practice—during the last fifteen years—he has never lost a patient from scarlet fever.

MISCELLANEOUS.

An average fibre of raw silk will sustain a weight of fifty grains.

The earth receives one out of 2,300 million parts of light and heat given off by the sun.

PRINCE NAPOLEON paid a visit to the Emperor after the delivery of his speech, and remained in conference with him for about half an hour. It is said that the Emperor has expressed great sympathy with many of the ideas developed by Prince Napoleon.

DURING the year 1867, railway proprietors have paid an income-tax of something more than three-pence-halfpenny in the pound, or one and four-fifths per cent., to persons injured by collision, or to their representatives. £19,630,000 has been paid as dividend during the year, and 347,379l. as compensation.

EXPORTS OF SILK-WORMS' EGGS FROM JAPAN.—During the past year the quantity of silkworms' eggs exported from Japan amounted to 2,192,651 cards. Of this number 800,000 have been sent to France, Spain, Turkey, Persia, and other countries, and the remainder to Italy.

THE authorities of the Louvre have had fixed in the windows of the rooms of Henri II., Henri IV., and of the Sauvageot Museum, 101 pieces of stained glass of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Flemish, German, Swiss, and French, of great beauty and in excellent preservation.

THE Empress Eugenie has founded an annual prize of £500, to be awarded by the Geographical Society of France to any Frenchman for the discovery, work, or enterprise which shall be judged to be the most useful to progress, to the science of geography, or to the external commercial relations of France.

IN America, Mr. Horsford has recently found that the element fluorine is generally present in the substance of the brain, and that its presence can be verified by the usual chemical tests in the ash, which results when the substance of the brain is calcined with pure lime or pure potash. The experiments appear to have been carefully made.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
GRAND COURT ... 553	MISCELLANEOUS ... 575
THE DOWAGER'S SE- CRET ... 557	EXPORT OF SILKWORKS ... 575
RANDOLPH PERRY'S ... 559	EGGS FROM JAPAN ... 575
TEMPTATION ... 559	STATISTICS ... 575
KATIE'S RUSE ... 561	EXPENSES OF FORTI- FICATIONS ... 575
JUDITH LAWTON ... 562	STATISTICS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ... 575
THE BIRTH MARK ... 565	HOUSEHOLD TREAS- URES ... 575
SCIENCE ... 568	
LUNAR CHANGES ... 568	
INVENTION FOR SUP- PLYING A CITY WITH HOT AIR ... 568	GRAND COURT, com- menced in ... 323
HAMMERING IRON UN- TIL RED HOT ... 568	THE HAMPTON MYST- ERY, commenced in ... 323
EVILYN'S PLOT ... 569	EVILYN'S PLOT, com- menced in ... 326
THE HAMPTON MYST- ERY ... 572	THE BIRTH MARK, commenced in ... 330
PACIFIC ... 574	THE DOWAGER'S SE- CRET, commenced in ... 331
COTTAGE UNDER THE MILL ... 575	
GEMS ... 575	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RALPH.—Margaret Woffington, the Irish actress, was born in 1718 and died in 1790.

ELLEN M.—The child should bear its mother's maiden surname. Its Christian name, of course, can be according to taste.

E. F. RUSSELL wishes to announce to a former correspondent that he can be accommodated with old postage stamps to the extent of one hundred and nine thousand.

JULIA.—The literal meaning of *memento moris* is, "remember to die," or "remember that you must one day die."

CLERICUS.—The time an apprentice is ill is reckoned in the period of his servitude, but, in the absence of a special covenant to the contrary, he has no claim to wages while absent.

L. S.—*De Capo di Fine* is an Italian musical expression placed at the end of a movement, signifying that the performer must return to the first part and conclude where the word *Fine* is placed.

WALTER.—"Permanent Rank," in the military service, is a rank which does not cease with any particular circumstances. Those officers, having permanent rank, take precedence of those who have only temporary rank, although their commissions bear the same date.

S. Y.—Trust to yourself and you will do well. Patrons are curious people. Men of the brightest parts are often the most fickle, just as mercury, one of the brightest of the metals, is also one of the most volatile.

GASTON.—Why should there not be friendship between men and women? We boldly say let a man form a friendship with a woman, even though she be no longer young or handsome; there is softness and tenderness attached to it that no male friendship can know.

S. T. D.—Your friends advise you well. It is useless to look forward to future prosperity if the present be not occupied in laying the foundation of it. Many cling to a distant hope, and reject a progressive certainty.

ANNE CLATON.—In obedience to your request we append the names and addresses of two wholesale Berlin wool merchants: Mr. Swainson, 4, Huggin Lane, London, E.C.; and Messrs. Louis Kulp & Co., 42, Newgate Street, London, E.C.

EVA.—*Dejeuner a la fourchette* is, literally, "a fork breakfast"; it is a nondescript kind of expression, and according to the time at which it is taken may be considered either breakfast, luncheon, or dinner, only under another name.

A HATER OF STIMULANTS.—Absinthe, the stimulant which has so long been making havoc among the French, and which, unfortunately, is daily becoming popular in England, is a substance found in common wormwood, and called by the discoverer the "bitter principle."

DOUBTFUL.—With your means you ought not to become security for anyone. Say no, and let it be a decided no. It is more honest to say plainly we cannot do what is desired than to amuse people with false words, which often lead them into difficulties.

SARAH ANN.—There is no cure for blushing, except by mixing in good society, and so acquiring a collected demeanour. But blushing is natural and one of the charms of beauty. It is a sign of feeling and sensitiveness, and enchants the man.

B. H. F. M.—The aurora borealis, which appears in the northern sky, has been referred to a certain electrical condition of the atmosphere; but its real nature is as much a mystery to science as that of comets. Both doubtless are of the same radical constitution.

LILLIE.—We cannot advise, but take this lesson to your heart—home can never be transferred, never repeated, in the experience of an individual. The place consecrated to parental love by the sports and innocence of childhood is the only home of the human heart.

A DISPUTANT.—You are right in asserting that the Probate and Divorce Courts are generally presided over by one judge, called the Judge Ordinary; but the latter has the liberty, at every time, to call in the assistance of two of the judges or barons of the Common Law Courts, to hear appeals from his decisions.

YOUNG PUBLISHER.—Be warned in time, give up your intention of making your beer-shop a betting-house, without you are prepared to pay a penalty of 30*l.* and costs, or imprisonment not exceeding two months. 2. You may not keep a public billiard or bagatelle table without procuring a licence from the magistrates. The penalty is 5*l.* per day, while the cost of the licence is but 6*l.* per year.

GOLDSMITH.—The assaying of silver and gold is effected by a process called cupellation. Cupels are small flat crucibles, made by pressing bone ash moistened with

water into circular moulds, and they are dried by exposure to the air. The principle upon which the operation depends is, that all metals with which gold and silver are usually alloyed are convertible into oxides by exposure to atmospheric air at a high temperature, whereas the precious metals remain unacted upon.

AN APPRENTICE.—Bell-metal is an alloy of copper and tin, used for bells, cymbals, and other sonorous bodies. The proportions usually adopted vary very slightly, according to the size of the bell to be made; but they may be stated generally to be 80 parts of copper to 20 of tin, or even occasionally 17 parts of copper to 23 of tin.

ONE IN A FIX.—We are unacquainted with the particular merits or demerits of the individual to whom you allude. Were we "in a fix" we should certainly not apply to a person who adopts such a method of making himself known. Go to some respectable chemist in your neighbourhood and take his advice.

TEXTORIALER.—St. Anthony is said to have lived to the age of 105 on 120*l.* of bread daily and water; James the Hermit on a like diet, to 104; St. Epiphanius, to 115; St. Simeon the Stylite, to 112; and St. Mungo, to 185. It is not, however, stated how many have died in making the effort. Such severe abstinence may have killed more than it has preserved.

C. M. B. (Manchester).—We have no knowledge of the manuscript to which you allude. Possibly it may be amongst a number "waiting for perusal," but we have not seen it. Silence in these matters should, for the most part, be construed as a method of declining the proffered contribution, even if it has been laid upon our table.

LEONORA.—The word "anagram" means a transposition of the letters of a name or sentence, as from Mary is made army. From the question put by Pilate to our Saviour, "Quid est veritas?" (what is truth?) we have the remarkable anagram, "Est vir qui adest" (the man who is here). The French are said to have introduced the art, as it is now practised, about the year 1550, in the reign of Charles IX.

MY OLD GLAD HOME.

Oh! I long for a romp on the green hill side,
A floating laugh in my girlish pride,
A quaint old song by the orchard bridge,
A laugh and a leap on the mountain ridge.
A song and a smile where the wild bees roam,
And the wind-harps meet 'round my old, glad home.

Oh! I long for a shout on the smooth, broad plain,
A skip and a dance down the green old lane,
A laughing gush of this wayward heart,
Where the shadows meet, and the echoes part,
A skip and a roam where the tall trees loom,
And the sunshine steals to my old, glad home.

Oh! I long for a peep at my father's trees,
The soft, green turfs of the meadow-lease,
The gushing swell of the wild bird's lay,
The huntsman's song at the break of day,
The brooklet's laugh and the zephyr's rove,
And the rural sounds of the home I love.

Oh! I long for a chat with the friends I love,
A race and a hunt for the wild fox-glove,
A springing step where the maple buds,
And the leaflets swell in the old, gay woods,
A wander and hunt 'neath the maples' dome,
A chat with the loved in my old, glad home.

Oh! I'm weary of wishing the livelong day,
For a gleeful chase and a wildwood stray,
For a tuncful gush of my spirit-harp,
An echo and swell on the wayward cart,
A ramble and chat where my loved ones roam,
And their vespers steal to my old glad home.

H. A. B.

H. W. H.—You cannot reclaim the presents. Such gifts are irrevocable. If you could reclaim it would be exceedingly unequal to do so. It appears to us that the break-up of the connection is due to your own fault. We don't like the "whining" which pervades your note. Be more of a man.

C. K. C.—The cost of the knives you require is about five or six shillings each. You can select them at the warehouse of a cutler in a large way. The art is one that cannot be learned from a book. You must be personally instructed. The material can be purchased at Bridge and Co.'s, High Street, St. Giles', London. Unless you are in want of amusement, it would be better for you to purchase the corks prepared for use.

PETERBOROUGH.—We are obliged to our ingenious correspondent for his table of the "Monarchs of England." We are, however, not favourable to any artificial aids to memory, constructed upon what we suppose is termed a scientific basis. While we should have no difficulty in engraving the facts contained in our friend's table upon our memory in the usual way, so as to be able to answer off-hand any question he could propound, we almost despair of ever being able to master his "plan" and his "key."

F. R.—The lines upon which you ask a criticism are irredeemably bad. The jingle which pervades them does not even rhyme. In the last stanza the refrain is altogether omitted, while in the first two stanzas it is unintelligible. We are candid with you, trusting that you will, from our hint, turn your industry to some better account. Certainly, you have been industrious to plod through a task so unfitted to your powers, and we do not the less admire your perseverance because you have so utterly failed.

AN ARTICLED PUPIL.—1. Ashton-under-Lyne is so called because it is situated upon the line of boundary which separates Lancashire from Cheshire, that is upon the river Tame. 2. Eighteen hundred and sixty-nine is a portion of the nineteenth century, because it is within the nineteenth hundredth year since our Saviour was born upon earth. If you should be alive in the year 1901, that is thirty-two years hence, you will have commenced the twentieth century. Your grandfather probably lived in the eighteenth century. 3. A young unmarried lady should not say anything but taking wine. Neither should a married lady when company is present. But in

the family circle there would be no harm in the latter casting a loving look on her husband or child, and adding: "Heaven bless you, dear," as she raised the glass to her lips. 4. Handwriting very good.

MABEL.—Bedlam is a corruption of Bethlehem, the name of a religious house in London, which, subsequently to the dissolution of monasteries, was converted into an hospital for lunatics, but still retained its former appellation. It was granted by Henry VIII. in 1547, with all its revenues, to the mayor, commonalty, and citizens of London, from which time it became a hospital for lunatics. The present hospital of St. Mary, Bethlehem, in the parish of Lambeth, was erected in 1814.

KINGSTON.—Three of her Majesty's daughters are married. The Princess Royal, married on the 25th January, 1855, to the Crown Prince of Prussia, received a dowry of 40,000*l.*, in addition to an annuity of 8,000*l.*, paid out of the Consolidated Fund; to the Princess Alice, married to Prince Louis of Hesse-Darmstadt, on the 1st July, 1862, was granted a dowry of 30,000*l.*, and an annuity of 6,000*l.*; and the portion of the Princess Helena, married to Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein on July 6th, 1866, was the same as that bestowed upon the Princess Alice.

TYRO.—1. You must be duly proposed and seconded by some member of the club. Your application will then be laid before the committee and submitted to the ballot or some other test. 2. The address is Langham Street, Cavendish Square, W. You are, of course, aware that its members are artists of great talent and fame. 3. If you take a walk in Bond Street, or in Leicester Square and its neighbourhood, you will find dealers of the description you require. 4. There are so many that we cannot specify them all. Field's "Art of Painting and Grammar of Colouring" prices two shillings, would perhaps suit you. Order of any bookseller.

GERTRUDE.—There is no remedy. It is the stamp of nature and cannot be improved. But why call it a disfigurement? It is compatible with an amiable and loving disposition; it is not necessarily connected with anything low and debasing in the character. It is true it often indicates some lack of those high intellectual powers which make a great stir in the world and obtain mighty influence over their fellow mortals; but if your destiny be not so high, earnest endeavour may yet bring you your share of happiness. Cease, then, to be troubled on this score. Do your best, cultivate good and pure feelings, and repose upon the compensating bounty of the Great Creator, who has a tender care for all.

A TOTAL ABSTAINER.—Alcohol is derived by fermentation or distillation from substances or fluids containing sugar; in other words, the matter of sugar, when subjected to a certain temperature, undergoes a change, and the elements of which the sugar was previously composed enter into a new combination, which constitutes the fluid named alcohol, or spirits of wine. Raymond Lully, the alchemist (thirteenth century), is said to have given it the name of *alcohol*; but for a time, what it was kept a profound mystery. When it became more known, physicians prescribed it only as a medicine, and imagined it had the property of prolonging life; hence, they designated it *Aqua Vita*, or the "Water of Life," and the French to the present day call their cognac *Eau de vie*.

NEWSPAPER.—It was long supposed that the first English newspaper was the *English Mercury*. This, however, was proved by the learned antiquarian, Mr. Watts, of the British Museum, a mere forgery of the first Lord Hardwicke. The first printed newspaper was put forth by Nathaniel Butter, and several associates whose names appear in the imprint of that first newspaper, entitled the *Weekly News*. It was published in 1622, and through the interference of the notorious and odious Star Chamber was suppressed, 1640. Nevertheless, there can now be no doubt that the *Weekly News* was the first printed newspaper. The next regular periodical print was the *Kingdom Intelligence*. Then followed the *Intelligence*, started by Sir Roger L'Estrange. But the foregoing were superseded by the *Oxford Gazette*, in 1665, which still exists under the well-known title of the *London Gazette*.

HARRY. twenty, medium height, brown hair and eyes, steady, affectionate, and respectably connected.

J. H. W. twenty-two, 5ft. 7in., dark, ruddy complexion, and a book-keeper. Respondent must be about eighteen, of medium height, and be tolerably good looking and good tempered.

EMILIE. seventeen, 5ft. 4in., amiable, loving, affectionate, educated, and fond of music. Respondent must be well educated, respectably connected, and fond of his home. Would like *carte de visite*.

ELLA AND ETHEL.—"Ella," twenty-five, tall, pretty, good natured, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, industrious, and fond of home. "Ethel," dark hair, brown eyes, cheerful, and handsome. Respondent must be tall, good looking, and fond of home. Both wish for *carte de visite*.

MAUD, MILLY, and ALICE.—"Maud," twenty, blue eyes, brown hair, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, a few years her senior, and possess brown hair and eyes. "Milly," eighteen, good figure, a good songstress, and has light hair and brown eyes. Respondent must be fond of music, tall, fair, and gentlemanly. "Alice," eighteen, brown hair and eyes, musical, and cheerful. Respondent must be tall, dark, fond of music and home. These three ladies are friends, and announce that "money is no object."

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